THE FLORENCE STORIES

JACOB ABBOTT



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THE SHANKLIN HOTEL.

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FLORENCE STORIES JACOB ABBOTT.



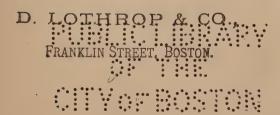
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FLORENCE STORIES,

BY JACOB ABBOTT.

VISIT TO THE ISLE OF WIGHA.



THE FLORENCE STORIES.

I. - FLORENCE AND JOHN

II. - GRIMKIE.

III. - THE ORKNEY ISLANDS.

IV .- THE ENGLISH CHANNEL.

V .- THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

VI. - FLORENCE'S RETURN.

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CONTENTS.

GEAPTER	PAGE
JTHE MAN-CARRIAGE	11
II.—THE RAILWAY STATION	2 2
III.—FLORENCE A QUEEN	32
IV.—THE PRETEXT	- 39
V.—DEEP WATER	46
VI.—TC I ORTSMOUTH	52
VII.—THE VOYAGE	65
VIII.—RYDE PIER	71
IX.—A WALK AT RYDE	80
X.—Pleasures of Ryde	89
XI.—ABOUT CHINES	96
XII.—RIDE TO SHANKLIN	101
XIII.—THE HOTEL	109
XIV.—On the Downs	114
XV.—Down the Chine	122
XVI -Mrs. Campbell's Management	129
XVII MRS. MORELLE'S MANAGEMENT	136
XVIII.—Mrs. Pelham	143
X1X.—THE UNDERCLIFF	156
XXVENTFOR	16"

viii Contents.

CHAPTER XXI.—THE BEACH AT VENTNOR	
XXII.—New Lodgings	. 186
XXIII.—THE AQUARIUM	. 196
XXIV.—THE ROMANTIO WALK	203
XXV.—THE NEEDLES	. 215
XXVI.—Cowes	. 222
XXVII.—THE FERRY-BOAT	. 236
XXVIII.—Conclusion	249

ENGRAVINGS.

L-THE SHANKLIN HOTELFronti	PAGI Piece.
II.—Interview with Boots	. 43
II.—MAP. SITUATION OF THE ISLE OF WIGHT	64
IV.—ARRIVAL AT RYDE	77
V.—Shore at Shanklin	125
7I.—VENTNOR	171
IIEMBARKING FOR THE MAIN	224



THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

THE MAN-CARRIAGE.

In the frontispiece you will see a picture of a very pretty hotel in the Isle of Wight, where Florence spent nearly a fortnight, with her mother, and Grimkie, and John, one summer while they were in England. This hotel, and what the children did while there, will be fully described in a future chapter. All I have to say about it here is, that it was seeing a picture of this hotel in a shop-window at Brighton that led Florence to think she would like to go to the Isle of Wight. It would be charming, she thought, to live in such a pretty hotel, situated, not in a town, but among woods and gardens, and with such a beautiful view of the sea as there must be from it, and of the ships and boats coming and going.

I think, however, that what chiefly attracted

Florence's attention to this hotel, was that it was so antique and venerable in its appearance, and above all that it had a thatched roof.

"We have seen a great many thatched roofs in England," she said to John, as they were looking at the picture in the shop-window, "but we have never lived in a house that had one."

"And besides," said John, "perhaps I could reach up my hand from some of the windows, where the roof comes down pretty close to them, and find some bird's nests among the straw,—humming-birds, perhaps or robins."

"Very likely," said Florence.

This was a very charming idea, but, unfortunately, I imagine that, though birds do often build nests under the thatch of a house or barn, Johnny would be more likely to encounter caterpillars' nests and spiders, than humming-birds or even robins, by putting his hand up from the windows under a thatched roof like this.

The conversation above described took place at Brighton, which is a large and handsome town on the southern coast of England, not very far from the point opposite to which the Isle of Wight is situated. The reason why a town has been built in this place is because the water is very shallow there off the shore. It is a curious fact that along the coasts of England, towns are

built in some places because the water is deep there, and in other places for exactly the opposite reason, namely, because it is shallow.

If the water is deep in any place along the coast, there ships can come in easily, and approach close to the land, to be unladen. Accordingly it is in these places that towns for business spring up, especially if a portion of the deep water is inclosed by land, so as to form a sheltered bay or harbor where vessels may lie safe at anchor while they are waiting for their cargoes.

On the other hand, if the water is shallow in any place off the shore, and especially if it has a smooth sandy bottom, as it almost always has in such cases, it makes a fine place for people to bathe. They can either wade out themselves over the sandy bottom, or they can have bathing machines, as they are called, which are little houses on wheels, large enough for people to dress and undress in, with a door and steps to go down into the water. These machines are backed down the sloping, sandy bottom till they get to where the water is deep enough, and then stop, and the people that are inside then go down into the water.

Thus, in places on the coast where the water is deep, the town which is built becomes a place

of business. There are wharves and piers built, and ships arriving from foreign parts, and setting sail again, and stores and ware-houses to hold the goods, and great freight trains going and coming all the time on the railways.

On the other hand, where the water is shallow, the town which is built is a place of pleasure. There are a great many handsome hotels and boarding-houses, with views of the sea from the windows, and a long line of bathing machines drawn up on the shore, and horses and carriages for people to take rides and drives in the environs, while the trains of railway carriages that are continually going and coming bring visitors and parties of pleasure.

And here a curious question arises, how at happens that there is such a difference in the depth of the water at different points along the coast, so that in some places it is deep enough for ships to come up near the land, and in others shallow enough for men and women, and even children, to wade out for a considerable distance into the water. I will explain how this happens.

And first as to the places where the water is shallow. The manner in which the shoals and shallows are formed is this. The waves of the sea are all the time beating against the rocks

and cliffs which form the margin of the land, and undermining them. The fragments which fall down are then broken and ground up by being knocked and rubbed against each other, and in this way are produced vast quantities of sand and pebbles, which the sea spreads evenly over the bottom, all along the shores, and thus forms smooth beaches, and a sloping, sandy or gravelly bed, extending to a great distance from the land.

The sea seems in some mysterious way to have the power of separating the coarse pebbles from the fine, and both from the sand, and it forms a bottom in some places of one of these materials, and in others of another. Where it deposits fine sand, or even very fine and smooth pebbles, the beach is easy to walk upon, and the bottom does not hurt the bather's feet. Wherever there is such a place as this a large town often grows up, to furnish accommodations to the great number of people that go there in the summer to bathe and to enjoy the sea views. And of all the places of this kind in England, perhaps Brighton is the largest and most frequented.

The town of Brighton is formed principally of one principal street running for miles along the shore, with houses on the land side of it, the fronts of them facing the sea. These houses are almost all hotels or lodging-houses, with shops on the ground-floor.

On the sea-ward side of this street is a low wall, where you can stand and look over to the beach below. Near the wall there stand at various places, long lines of what the children called man-carriages, but what the Brighton people call Bath chairs. They are so named from the town, Bath, where it is supposed they first came into use. These carriages are like a low wheeled chaise, with a top which can be put up or down, and are large enough only to hold one person. They are drawn by a man, and that is the reason that the children called them man-carriages. They are, in fact, just like some of the little carriages used for taking children to ride in this country, only they are large enough for the mother to ride in them instead of the child, and are drawn by a good stout man instead of a nursery maid.

Between these rows of carriages and the wall is a broad sidewalk, where Florence and the other children used to be very fond of walking, because as they walked along upon it they could look over the walls down to the beach below, and off over the sea. The beach, which is very broad, presented always a very animated specta-

cle. In some places there were long rows of fishing vessels drawn up upon the strand, by means of tackles which were worked by capstans fixed to the ground near the wall, where they were out of the reach of the highest tides. In other places were large sai' boats drawn up in the same way, and intended for the use of excursionists and pleasure parties who might like to take a sail when the weather was fair and the sea pretty smooth. In other places were rows of bathing machines, some drawn up upon the beach, and others out in the water, with many groups of bathers floundering and splashing about in bathing dresses, the long hair of the women and girls hanging down over their shoulders. Then there were groups of children digging in the sand with little wooden shovels, or wheeling loads of pebbles about in little wheel barrows, and fishermen mending nets, and boatmen repairing rigging, or caulking a leaky boat which they had turned bottom upwards for the purpose, and boys wading about bare-legged, getting shell fish off the rocks, where there were rocks, or poking about in the mud, where there was mud, in search of snails.

The children were never tired of watching these and similar operations which were always going on along the beach, and which made the line of the shore a continued scene of the most incessant life and animation for an extent of two or three miles. They could walk along the sidewalk, stopping every now and then to look over the wall, or if they chose they could go down, for there were openings here and there, and flights of stone steps leading to the beach below.

This grand street along the shore is called the Marine Parade, but it must not be supposed that long and splendid as it is, it constitutes the whole of the town. There are a great many other streets and squares extending back from the shore, and filling a sort of valley which here opens into the interior. All these together form a city of not far from fifty or sixty thousand inhabitants in ordinary times, and in the fashionable season of nearly one hundred thousand. Among the other public buildings is a grand palace of a very fantastic form and character, built by one of the kings of England, who was very fond of coming to Brighton in the summer, some years ago.

One day while Mrs. Morelle was in Brighton she sent Florence and John with a letter to put in one of the street letter boxes, and on their way home they saw the picture of the thatch-covered hotel in the Isle of Wight exhibited

among other prints and engravings in a stationer's window. They immediately came to the conclusion that the Isle of Wight was just the place for them to go to, and as they knew that their mother had formed no definite plans in respect to her next movements, they determined at once to go home and propose this project to her.

While talking together on this subject, they crossed the street to the side that was toward the sea, in order to return by way of the outer sidewalk, so as to look over the wall and see what was going on on the beach. They observed that nearly all the man-carriages had been taken off the stand. It was a pleasant morning and it seems that a great many ladies, and also several invalid gentlemen, had concluded to have a ride. There were only two or three of the carriages remaining, and of these all but one was taken as they came along. This one happened to stand nearly opposite the house where Mrs. Morelle's lodgings were.

This last remaining carriage belonged to a man who looked rather old and not very strong. In fact, the servants who came to engage the carriages always looked out for a good strong and healthy looking man to draw them, just as they would look out for good horses in the case

of a horse carriage. Thus this poor old man was left. He was walking to and fro on the sidewalk near his carriage looking anxious and careworn.

Florence observed all this as she came up. Johnny did too, and when they reached the place he stopped to speak to the old man.

"Can't you get a fare?" he asked.

"No, my young gentlentan," replied the old man. "I have not had a fare to-day, and I do not see when I shall get one unless you and this young lady would like to take a ride along the cliffs."

"Let's go," said Johnny, turning suddenly to Florence.

"No," said Florence, "but perhaps mother would like to go. We might go and ask her, and we might walk along by the side of the carriage."

"And push," said Johnny, "I could help push."

"Bless your heart my young lady, if you could get me a fare," rejoined the old man, "you don't know what a kindness it would be."

So the children went across the road to the house and up into Mrs. Morelle's parlor, which was on the second floor in the front—Mrs. Morelle having chosen a room in that situation in

order to have a commanding view of the beach, and of the sea from the windows. Florence and John told her their story. They took her to the window and pointed out the old man, who was walking anxiously to and fro.

"He has not had a fare to-day, mother," said Florence, "and I am sure his wife and children must be suffering for want of something to eat. They won't have any dinner unless you go and take a ride."

"Yes, mother," said John, "and you must make haste or somebody else will get him for he is the last man on the stand."

The children did not observe that the reasons they assigned were somewhat conflicting, and their mother did not stop to criticise them, but said at once she would go. So Johnny opened the window and lifted up his finger, and the man seeing the signal immediately came over to the door. Mrs. Morelle put on her things and went down, and the whole party immediately set off on their excursion.

CHAPTER II.

THE RAILWAY STATION.

THE party on leaving the door proceeded to the eastward, still keeping in the road or street which led along the shore, until they came to the end of the town. Here the road went up a gentle ascent, still following the shore, until, at length, it came to a broad tract of smooth and level grass land which extended along the top of a range of cliffs from which the children could look down over the sea, and could see the waves rolling in upon the beach below.

Here Mrs. Morelle got out of the carriage and walked about with the children. The cliffs were not very high, but they were very precipitous, and it was safe to go near enough to look down. It is not safe, however, in such cases to go too near, for the waves beating all the time upon the rocks below undermine the cliffs, and masses frequently break off from above and fall down to the shore, where the fragments are beaten against each other, and broken to pieces, by the waves, as has already been described.

The children walked along the top of these cliffs for more than half a mile, the man following with the carriage. At length, when it was time for them to turn Mrs. Morelle took her seat in the carriage again, and began to ride back—the children walking by her side.

While thus returning the children brought forward their proposal of going to the Isle of Wight. They described the picture they had seen of the thatched-roof hotel, and expatiated earnestly on the picturesque and beautiful situation of it.

"Perhaps it is not a real hotel," said Mrs. Morelle. "It may be only a fancy sketch."

"Oh, no, mother," said Florence, "it is real, I am sure. The name of the place that it is in was put down, and the name of the man that keeps it."

"Then it may be the picture of some old hotel," said Mrs. Morelle, "and perhaps it is

shut up now."

All the reply the children could make to this suggestion, was that they thought that so pretty a hotel must have a great many customers, and would not be at all likely to be given up.

"However," said Mrs. Morelle, "I don't think that is of much consequence, for even if that notel should be closed I know there are plenty of others on the island—all perfectly charming I have been on the Isle of Wight and like it very much."

"Then you have no objection to our going."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle. "I have objections, but I do not say they are insurmountable. First, I don't know exactly how to get there. We must go in a steam-boat from some place or other, and I don't like making short voyages in steam-boats very much. But then in this case I believe it is sheltered water. We don't have to go out to sea much."

"Grimkie will know," said John,—" when he comes home."

Grimkie had gone up to London the day before to get some money from the bank, and also some books, and various articles at the shops that Mrs. Morelle required. He was to return that morning, and the train in which he was to come was then nearly due. So after some conference on the subject it was determined that the man of the carriage, on entering the town, should turn toward the station, which was in the back part of the town, near the head of the valley—and that there Mrs. Morelle should dismiss him, and remain with the children at the station until the train should come in.

On arriving at the station Mrs. Morelle paid

the carriage-man, and then all went in, and passing through a very large waiting room, with different ticket offices around it, they proceeded to the platform.

The platform of an English railway station presents a very busy and curious scene. Doors open to various apartments, such as offices, cloak rooms, refreshment rooms and the like, and groups of passengers are walking to and fro waiting for trains, and there are porters, in the railway uniform, and neatly dressed policemen, and various other personages to be seen. Then there is also almost always a little book shop with a great number of showy books, in bright paper bindings of all colors, on the shelves ;and magazines, and pamphlets, and newspapers, and a long row of new publications displayed on a sort of counter before. There are also large and comfortable settees placed here and there along the walls, where passengers who are waiting can sit, and while they are sitting can amuse themselves with watching what is going on.

Mrs. Morelle took a seat upon one of these settees, but the children preferred walking about. Florence went to the little book shop and began looking at the books; but very soon she came back to her mother to tell her that there was a guide to the Isle of Wight among the guide

books there, price three and six pence, which in English money is equal to not far from eighty cents. Mrs. Morelle gave her some money to buy the book, and after buying it she brought it and gave it to her mother.

Not long after this the whistle was heard as of a train coming, and a great bell was rung at the station, and very soon afterward the train came trundling in.

As soon as the train stopped, Grimkie appeared at the door of one of the carriages, and a railway porter, who opened the carriage door for him, began to take out his parcels.

Grimkie said they must have a carriage, on account of the parcels to be conveyed to the lodgings, and so the porter ordered one, and put the parcels in. Then Mrs. Morelle and all the children got in, and on their way home they began to talk about the Isle of Wight.

It is not necessary to give all the conversation in detail, but it will be sufficient to say that Mrs. Morelle expressed no opinion whatever on the subject, but only heard patiently all that the children had to say. She proposed various difficulties and objections, not in the way of opposition to the plan, but only to see how the children would remove them or remedy them.

One thing that Mrs. Morelle said was that

which energy there are the solutions which made it all the more easy for their enthusiasm to be kindled by the idea of going there themselves

And in respect to Mrs. Morelle, her having been already on the island made her more, and not less, inclined to go again. So that was no objection. Finally, just before the carriage arrived, she said, as she usually did in such cases, that she would consider the subject, and "sleep upon it," as she expressed it; and the next morning after breakfast would let them know her decision.

The children were very uncertain what the decision would be, so careful had Mrs. Morelle been not to commit herself in any way, so as to retain for herself perfect liberty of action. The readers of this book will know, of course, however, that she decided to go, inasmuch as if the party had not gone, this book would never have been written

The children were consequently greatly pleased to learn the next morning that they were to go, and they were perhaps, still more pleased by one of the conditions which Mrs. Morelle made, which was that they, the children, and more particularly Florence, should take the whole charge of the expedition, and make all the plans and arrangements, so that she herself was to have no trouble, care, or responsibility whatever.

It often happened that Mrs. Morelle, in her management with her children, pursued a plan substantially like this, of throwing a great deal of responsibility upon them. Some cases of this kind have, I believe, been explained before, in this series. She knew very well that the children would be likely to make mistakes, and in many respects she could plan much better for the party than they could. But she considered it a very important portion of Florence's education that her judgment, her forethought, and her power of making practical arrangements in a systematic and orderly manner should be cultivated, so that she would be prepared to act her part well in future life, in the thousands of cases in which the exercise of these and of similan qualities would be required. She knew, too. that there was no way of properly developing

these traits of character but by giving them an opportunity to be exercised; and she thought it would be much better for the children to make mistakes in cases of little importance, and while she herself was at hand to correct or remedy them, than to wait for them to acquire their experience when the serious cases and responsibilities of life should rest upon them, and when their mistakes would be of so much greater moment, and might sometimes be irreparable.

"I have concluded to go to the Isle of Wight," said Mrs. Morelle, when the time arrived for her to give her decision, "on condition that Florence will make all the arrangements, and take the whole party there, without my having any care or trouble about it."

"Oh, mother," said Florence, "I could not do that"

"Then we can't go, I suppose," said Mrs. Morelle quietly.

"Let Grimkie do it, mother," said Florence; "he can do it just as well as not, but I never could do it in the world,"

"But Grimkie will be under your orders, and so you will have his services at your command, and whatever he can do you can do through him. You can have John at your command, too. You will be queen, as it were, and they

will be your ministers. You can tell them what you wish to have done, and they will do it."

"But sometimes," said Florence, "I shall not know what ought to be done."

"Then you can ask them to advise you," replied Mrs. Morelle. "Queens often have to depend very much upon their ministers for advice, in respect to what they are to do—a great deal more frequently, in fact, as I am told, than they act on their own knowledge. Their ministers collect information for them, and give them advice, as well as execute their commands.

"In this way you can have Grimkie and John at your disposal, but you must direct and decide every thing at last."

"But I should not know what part of the Isle of Wight to go to," said Florence. "It is a very large island. It is fifteen or twenty miles

long, I suppose."

"Well," said Mrs. Morelle, "if some parts are more pleasant or more curious than others, and you can't find out where these parts are, then we shall have to be content with going to the least interesting parts. That will be our nisfortune in not having a capable queen."

"Oh, we can find out that easily enough," said Grimkie. "We can study the map and the guide-book."

"We have got a guide-book," said Florence.
"I bought one yesterday at the station."

"Then that is all we want," said Grimkie.

"It is on the table near the window," said Mrs. Morelle. "I give it up to the queen's disposal."

Florence went to the window and took the guide-book, and she concluded to offer no further objection to being made the queen of the expedition.

CHAPTER III.

FLORENCE A QUEEN.

MRS. MORELLE requested the children to conduct their consultations and form their plans, as much as possible, out of her hearing, in order that she might have her time uninterrupted for her visitors and reading. All she required, she said, was to have a few hours' notice of the time when they were to set out, so that her girl Josephine might have time to pack the trunks.

It may seem strange that Mrs. Morelle should be willing really and truly to leave the planning of such a journey to children so young. And, in fact, I suppose there are many parents, who, if they pretended to do so, would not actually trust the arrangements to the children, but would contrive, while they appeared to leave the decision to them, really to manage and direct every thing themselves. And this, in some cases, might perhaps be the wisest course. But Mrs. Morelle's way was always, when she said she would leave any thing to the children, to do

it really and truly, in the most complete manner. She knew very well that there could be no great harm or danger in submitting herself to their disposal in such a case as this, for, in the first place, Grimkie, who was to be Florence's prime minister in her queenly office, had had a good deal of practice and experience in travelling, and he was not likely to make any very serious mistakes; and then, moreover, there were no mistakes that he could well make that would be likely to lead to any serious consequences. It was only the missing of a train, perhaps, or getting into a wrong train, or making choice of an undesirable hotel, or something of that sort, and any inconvenience which she might suffer from accidents of this kind she was very willing to disregard, for the sake of the great advantage the children would derive from having sometimes a real and serious responsibility thrown upon them.

As soon as Florence had received her commission—if it is proper to speak of a queen holding her office under a commission—she decided to go down and hold her first consultation with her counsellors upon the beach, or rather upon one of the seats which were placed there, along the shore, for the convenience of visitors.

"Come, Grimkie," said she, "we'll go down

on the beach and consider what we have got to do. We will take the guide-book with us."

So they all went down to the beach. They had but a short distance to go. It was only across the street and down a flight of steps on the other side of the opposite sidewalk.

"Now," said Grimkie, "the first thing is to find a seat."

As has already been said, there were seats placed along the line of the shore, at a moderate distance from each other, for the convenience of visitors. These seats were generally placed opposite to where the bathing machines stood, and were intended, in a great measure, for ladies who were waiting for a machine to be disengaged. They were often occupied, however, by ladies and gentlemen who had been walking on the beach, and wished to stop and rest themselves, or by other persons. They were placed back pretty near the wall which formed the boundary of the street, so as to be out of the reach of the highest tides.

The children walked along, looking for a vacant seat. The first one that they came to was occupied by a young lady, who had come down there to read. She was sitting under the shade of a large umbrella, with a long handle pointed at the lower end, so that it could be stuck down in

the sand. A footman had come with her, to plant the umbrella properly, and he was to come again at an appointed time to take it away.

There was room on this seat for the children to sit and hold their consultation, but they did not stop there for fear of disturbing the young lady.

The next seat that they came to was occupied by a nursery-maid, who was sitting there sewing, and at the same time exercising supervision over a group of little children who were playing in the sand near by. Our party concluded not to stop there for fear that the children, in talking and laughing, and in continually running to show the nursery-maid what they had found, might disturb them.

The next seat was free. Here accordingly Florence decided to stop. She sat down in the middle of the seat, and Grimkie and John took their places one on each side of her.

Here Grimkie and Florence opened the guide book and map, and began at once to study the topography of the Isle of Wight. John, however, soon got tired of this and so he went off to a group of two or three children who were at work on the sand a little way above where the waves came, digging a well. John thought he would go and help them.

They succeeded very well in digging down in the sand far enough to find water,—but the sides of the well caved in so fast, by the water oozing through, that the excavation soon began to look more like a pond than a well, and finally at John's suggestion, the children determined to make it a pond.

"And then," said John, "we will get some little fishes, and some crabs and crawlers if we

can, and put into it."

After John had been engaged in this way for about half an hour and had made quite a large pond, and was just ready to go in search of animals to stock it, he heard Florence calling him.

"Johnny," said she, "come here. I want to send you of an errand to mother."

"No," said John, "I'm too busy."

"Johnny," said Grimkie, "come here a minute."

John came to the seat running, and bringing the little spade with which he had been digging, in his hand, and looking as if he was in great haste to get back to his work.

"How do you suppose we shall ever get to the Isle of Wight," said Grimkie, "if it all depends upon Florence and we won't do what she says?"

John paused a moment, with a somewhat per plexed look, and then said,

"Well, I'll go. What is it?"

"Tell mother," said Florence, "that we want to find out what is the best way to go to the Isle of Wight, at one of the hotels, and it will cost about three shillings. Ask her if we may spend that much."

So John threw back the shovel toward the children at the pond, and ran off in the direction of the nearest flight of steps leading up to the street. In about ten minutes he returned bringing word from his mother that she had no objection if the queen thought that was the best plan.

"Then I will go," said Grimkie, "and Johnny, you may go with me or not, just as you please."

"To the hotel?" asked John.

"Yes," said Grimkie. "To the coffee-room."

Between playing at making ponds on the sea shore, and going to the coffee-room of a hotel, it was hard for John to choose. He, however, very soon decided to go with Grimkie, and they accordingly both at once set off, leaving Florence with the guide-book on the seat.

"I don't see what you want three shillings

for," said John, "if you are only going to ask them how to go to the Isle of Wight."

"Why, you see I want to order something at the hotel," replied Grimkie, "and also to pay the waiter and Boots," said Grimkie. "They van't afford to keep information at the hotel and rnish it to travellers for nothing."

"They would just as lief tell you as not," said John.

"They would be willing to tell me, I don't doubt," said Grimkie, "but they would think I was rather mean if I did not pay them something for it."

"I don't believe they would," said John.

"Yes," said Grimkie. "And if they did not I should think I was rather mean myself. It would be like trying to get a lawyer or a doctor to give you his advice without paying him his fee. So I am going to order something in the coffee-room."

"I am glad of that," said John, "for I begin to be hungry. What are you going to order?"

"I don't know exactly," said Grimkie.
"Something or other for a pretext."

Johnny did not know what pretext meant. He supposed, however, from Grimkie's using it in this connection that it meant luncheon—or something of that sort.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRETEXT.

An finglish hotel in a large town has a very different appearance from an American one, in this respect, namely, that every thing is much more still and quiet about it. The ambition of an English hotel keeper is to give his house as much as possible the air of a genteel private residence, secluded from bustle and noise; while the more bustle and noise there is about the doors of an American hotel, the better the landlord seems pleased. It looks like business, he thinks.

The hotel which Grimkie went to was, in fact, a very extensive building, but it made very little show upon the street. The boys on entering, found themselves in a rather spacious hall or entry, very nicely kept, with doors opening to different apartments and offices. There were meteorological instruments, and maps, and some pictures, hanging against the wall, such as would be suitable for the private house of a wealthy gentlemen. Over one of the doors, to-

ward the further end, were the words Coffee Room, in gilded letters, distinct, but not very large.

"Here is the coffee room," said Grimkie, and he walked directly toward the door in question. John followed him.

They found the coffee room an extremely well arranged and comfortable place. There were several small tables and some large ones all ready set out for luncheons or dinners, and besides these there were tables covered with books, and some with writing materials. In one corner was a small portion partitioned off with a screen, which seemed to belong specially to the waiter. There was a sideboard near this place. which was covered with plate and china, and a desk near by, where the waiter kept his accounts, and a door, behind the screen, leading out somewhere. John thought that this door must lead out into a kitchen, or to some place of that sort, for the waiter was continually going in and out, with the dishes which he brought to the guests, or carried away again.

Grimkie went forward boldly into the room, followed by John. He took a momentary survey of the different tables, and choosing one in suitable situation, he sat down himself on one

side of it, and placed John on the other. The -waiter very soon came to the place.

"We want you to give us some bread and cheese, waiter," said Grimkie, "and two glasses of milk."

"Very well, sir," said the waiter. "Would you prefer Cheshire or Stilton, sir?"

"Cheshire," replied Grimkie.

The waiter went away behind the screen, and presently returned with a large silver salver, on which were a pitcher and two tumblers, and also a plate of bread. After placing these upon the table he went away, and presently returned with a cheese tray containing almost half of a very large cheese.

"And waiter," said Grimkie, when the waiter had put down the cheese, "send in Boots, if you please. I want to see him."

"Very well, sir," said the waiter.

In a few minutes Boots, as they call him, who is the head porter of the inn or hotel, and whose business it is to know all about trains and conveyances and modes of travelling, came in. He advanced to the table where Grimkie was sitting.

"I wish to ask you about going to the Isle of Wight," said Grimkie. "There is a party going there, and I want to know about the best way."

"Yes, sir," said the porter. "The shortest way to the Isle of Wight from here is by Portsmouth and Ryde. You cross from Portsmouth to Ryde in a steamer."

"But we don't wish to go the shortest way," suggested John. "We want to go the longest

way."

A faint indication of a smile showed itself upon the porter's face, at hearing these words, but the grave and business like aspect of his countenance was immediately resumed, and he added looking now to John.

"Well sir, if you wish to take the longest way, then you will go by Southampton. You can go from Portsmouth to Ryde, or from Southampton to Cowes. I will show you the

places on the map."

So the porter went away and pretty soon returned with a map on which were laid down the localities in question. He explained the different modes of going, and the advantages and disadvantages of the different routes. He told them also what were the best hotels, and which the largest and best steamers. Grimkie took out a piece of paper from his wallet, and a pencil, and made a memorandum of all the important points. When, at length, he had obtained all the needful information, he told the porter he





was much obliged to him and gave him a shilling—an English shilling of course, which is equal in value to nearly a quarter of a dollar. The porter made him a low bow, thanked him and went away.

Grimkie then called the waiter and paid for the refreshments he had ordered, which the waiter said came to one and six pence. He also gave the waiter a shilling for himself, and then he and John left the hotel and went back to the seat on the bench where Florence was waiting for them.

"Ah, Florence," said John, "you don't know what a nice luncheon we had of bread and cheese and milk."

"I wish I had gone too," said Florence.

"Ah, you could not go," said Grimkie. "La dies never go to the coffee-rooms in England."

"They do in France," said Florence.

"Yes," said Grimkie, "they do in France, everywhere."

"That is the reason why I like France better than England," said Florence.

CHAPTER V.

DEEP WATER.

In a former chapter I explained how it happened that generally along the coast of an island like England, the water is shallow, being made so in consequence of the filling up of the bed of the sea near the shore, by the deposit of sand and gravel produced by the disintegration of the cliffs that form in many places the margin of the land. I must now explain how it happens that in some places deep channels of water are preduced, by means of which ships can come up near the land, or even within the land sometimes, where there are openings leading to bays or harbors within.

These deep channels are generally formed by the flowing in and out of the tides through openings in the line of the coast, by means of which the sand is washed out and carried away, and a deep passage way for the water is kept open. Of course, in order to have this effect produced, it is necessary that the opening into the land should communicate with some expanse within, which may serve as a reservoir for the water which is carried in by the tide. It is necessary, too, that this reservoir should be pretty large so as to receive and retain a considerable quantity of water when the tide is up, such as will produce a powerful rush when it flows out, so as to dig out the channel well and keep it clear.

Sometimes a river serves as such a reservoir. When the tide rises, off the mouth of the river, the water flows in, and if there is but little fall in the river, it flows up many miles. If now the tide rises ten or twelve feet, as it often does, and the river is half a mile wide and twenty or thirty miles long before, in ascending it, we come to a rise in the bed of the stream sufficient to arrest the progress of the water, then the tide will flow in until all that space is filled. Now it must take an enormous quantity of water to fill up a river half a mile wide and twenty miles long, to the depth of ten feet above its ordinary level; and all this vast amount has to pour in and out at the mouth of the river twice every day. It is easy to see that this strong current going back and forth with such a rush must wear out deep channels in the sands that line the coasts, and make passage ways for ships to come out and go in.

Sometimes, instead of a river, it is a sort of lake, or a bay, with a very narrow entrance opening from the sea, which forms the reservoir to receive the tidal water that flows in and out. In this case, the tide when it rises pours in through the opening leading in from the sea, and continues to pour in until the whole surface of the lake or harbor is raised as high as the water outside. This, if the lake or harbor is large, and if the tide rises high, requires a vast amount of water. Then when the tide falls, all this water runs out, and carries out with it a great quantity of sand and gravel from the channel ways, and thus deepens them and keeps them clear, so that vessels can pass in and out in deen water.

Now if you look upon the map * you will see that the Isle of Wight is separated from the main land by a narrow channel, and on the north side of it, on the coast of England, there are two places where channels of deep water are formed, one by a sort of lake and the other by a river. The one where the deep channels are formed by a lake is Portsmouth, and the lake becomes what is called Portsmouth harbor. This lake thus performs a double function. It

^{*} See map at the commencement of Chapter VII.

affords a large extent of sheltered water where ships may lie at anchor, safe from winds and waves, and also by taking in and pouring out a vast quantity of tidal water twice in twenty-four hours, it keeps the channels of ingress and egress open, and deep enough for vessels to pass in and out.

The other place—the one in which the reservoir of tidal water to make the channels is a river, is at Southampton. Both these places are on the English side of the Solent—as the channel or passage way between England and the Isle of Wight is called. They are different from each other, not only from the fact that in one the deep channels are produced by a lake, and in the other by a river, but also in the use that is made of them; for one of these harbors, Southampton, has been taken possession of by private merchants, and the other by the British government. Thus one is used for the coming and going of merchant ships, and the other, Portsmouth, for ships of war.

Both these harbors, as has already been remarked, are on the nortnern side of the channel separating England from the Isle of Wight, that is on the main land as it may be called. There is also another harbor on the south side, that is on the Isle of Wight itself. This other

harbor i. at the entrance of a river—the principal river on the island—which flows north from the centre of it and empties into the channel which separates the island from the main land almost opposite to the Southampton. The town which has grown up near the deep water here is called Cowes.

It must not be supposed that the formation of channels of deep water near the land, to serve for the entrance of ships, depends entirely upon the causes I have described. A great deal, in many cases, depends upon the character and conformation of the coast, as, for instance, whether the rocks which form the shore are hard and steep, or whether they are shelving or soft and easily undermined. Then, moreover, in some cases where rivers empty into the sea, and one might expect a deep channel to be formed, the neighboring shores are formed of sand banks or of rocks so easily crumbled that the passage ways for the water become very much choked up, and the ingress and egress of the water can not keep them free. Thus, except Cowes, there are scarcely any good harbors in the Isle of Wight. There are many small rivers running into the sea on different sides of the island, but the channels formed at the mouths of them are not deep enough for much else than fishing-boats, and yachts, and small coasting sloops and schooners. At every other part of the island the bottom of the sea slopes off very gradually from the shore. In some places it forms splendid beaches of smooth sand and pebbles; and here towns are built for the accommodation of people coming to bathe.

CHAPTER VI.

TO PORTSMOUTH.

When Grimkie explained to Florence all that he had learned from his conversation with Boots at the hotel, and showed her the places on the map, and pointed out the two ways of going to the Isle of Wight, one of which was by the way of Portsmouth, and thence to Ryde, and the other by way of Southampton, and thence to Cowes, Florence was at first undecided which way to take.

"I vote for the longest way," said John, "so that we can have more sailing."

"By the way of Southampton there is a water passage of thirteen miles," said Grimkie, "and by Portsmouth the water passage is only six miles."

"Then we must go by the way of Ports-mouth," said Florence.

"Oh no," said John. "You will like a great deal better to go by way of Southampton, I know, and so sail all the way down this long river." So John pointed to the map, and moved his finger down the broad estuary or bay called Southampton Water, along which it was evident the steamer must go, in proceeding from Southampton to Cowes.*

"Ah! but, Johnny," replied Florence, "the question is not what we like the best, but what mother will like best. She will like best the shortest sea voyage."

"It is very disinterested and generous in you," said Grimkie, "to think about Aunt Katie so much, and not about yourself."

"No," said Florence, "it is not disinterestedness or generosity at all. It is only selfishness. I want to plan the journey in the best way for mother, so that she may trust the planning to us again some other time. If we plan for ourselves altogether, and don't consider what she will like, then the next time she will decide for herself, and will not leave it to us at all."

"True," said Grimkie. "But in this case I don't know which, after all, Aunt will prefer. The voyage is twice as long by the way of Southampton, it is true, but then it is all the way in sheltered water. It is thirteen miles, and that will take us about an hour, I suppose

^{*} See the map, Chapter VII.

By way of Portsmouth it is only six miles, and that we can do in half an hour; but then the water there is more exposed to the swell of the sea."

"Let us ask her which she would like best," said John.

This proposal was agreed to, and John was at once dispatched to his mother with the question, namely, whether, in going to the Isle of Wight, she would prefer a voyage of an hour in sheltered water, or one of half an hour somewhat exposed to the swell of the sea

The answer which he brought back was that Mrs. Morelle found it rather difficult to decide the question, and she proposed, therefore, that they should go one way and return the other; and she would prefer, she said, to take the roughest passage first.

So it was at once decided to go by the way of Portsmouth.

Grimkie was very desirous of stopping one day at Portsmouth, in order to see the ships of war in the harbor, and on the great anchorage ground of Spithead, which lies off the town—and the docks where ships are built and repaired—and the fortifications—and other things of this kind for which Portsmouth has such worldwide renown. But Florence said she could not

decide whether to stop one day at Portsmouth or not. It would depend upon the weather.

"If it is pleasant weather we shall stop?" said John inquiringly.

"No," said Florence, "if it is pleasant weather we shall go—that is, if it is still weather, and the water is smooth, so that mother can have an easy passage. If it is breezy and rough on the water, then we shall stay in Portsmouth."

Florence gave her mother notice of the time appointed for setting off the next day, and accordingly on that evening the trunks were packed and the accounts were settled with the landlady, including pay for a good breakfast the following morning. After breakfast John was sent out to engage two carriages, and the whole party set out, Mrs. Morelle in charge of Grimkie in one carriage, and Florence under John's care in the other

When they arrived at the station, and the carriages drew up in front of the piazza, Mrs. Morelle said to Florence as soon as they had both alighted,

"Now Florence, as soon as you have given your directions to your men, you and I will go into the waiting-room, and wait till they are ready"

But Florence said that her men had received their directions already. So she and her mother went through the great ticket office to the platform on the other side, and there sat down on a settee to wait for Grimkie and John, who went to buy the tickets and attend to the luggage, as the English call it. In a few minutes Grimkie and John appeared accompanied by one of the railway porters, who very politely conducted the party to one of the railway carriages, -one of the nicest in the train. These carriages, as the reader probably well knows, are made in the form of a common carriage for ordinary roads, only there are three of them on one truck, which three form, as it were, one car. Each of these carriages has two seats, one front and one back, and each of these seats has three sittings, which are separated from each other by a good substantial arm, broad and well stuffed; and as the seats themselves, and also the backs are well stuffed, and covered with broadcloth, and are moreover very wide, the interior of the carriage has the appearance of having a row of three large and very comfortable arm-chairs extending across each end and facing each other.

The porter was very polite and attentive to the party in giving them their seats, and putting in all their small packages, and stowing them away, some under the seats and others within a net work receptacle overhead. A part of this politeness was due, no doubt, to the fact that Grimkie had given him a sixpence—of course an English one—a few minutes before.

"You will not change carriages, sir," said he to Grimkie, just before he shut the door, "until you reach Portsmouth, and you will have nobody else in this carriage."

So saying he made what may be called the coachman's bow, which is a quick nod of the head, accompanied by a peculiar jerk of the hand which is meant to denote touching the hat, then shut and locked the door and disappeared.

"I don't thank him for that," said John.

"For what?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"For not putting any more people into this carriage. Here are two seats that we don't want and I was in hopes he would put somebody else in. I wanted to see who it would be. One day, don't you recollect, when we were travelling in France, a girl came into our carriage that had a speaking doll, and we had great fun in making her say Papa and Mama, all the way."

The line of the railroad from Brighton to Portsmouth runs along parallel to the shore, and not far from it, and John soon began to look out the window in hopes of seeing that the water was roughened by the breeze, in order that Florence might have a good excuse for staying at Portsmouth the remainder of that day. But much to his disappointment there was not the least appearance of wind. The water, whenever he obtained a glimpse of it, appeared as smooth as glass. He hoped, however, that a breeze might come, and he watched the leaves of the trees for signs of its coming as impatiently as ever a boy did who had a new kite to raise.

This state of things continued until the train began to draw very near to Portsmouth, and the last ray of hope in his mind was extinguished by hearing his mother say to Florence just before they arrived,

"I am so glad we have got such a charming day for crossing the water."

There was a great scene of bustle and excitement at the station at Portsmouth when the train arrived. There were a great number of carriages in waiting, and among them several omnibuses, some going to the different hotels in the town, and others to the pier, to convey passengers to the steamer.

As soon as Mrs. Morelle and the children had descended from the carriage, and while Grimkie was attending to getting out the parcels, which

a porter was looking for under the seat, another porter said to Mrs. Morelle,

"Will you have a 'bus, madam, or a fly?"

"Grimkie," said Mrs. Morelle, "the porter asks whether we are to take an omnibus or a fly."

"A fly," said Grimkie, turning round. "Get us a fly, porter, or a carriage of some kind with seats for four."

So the two porters took the trunks and parcels—Mrs. Morelle and the party following them—out to the outside of the station, and there called up a carriage and put the luggage upon it. Mrs Morelle and the others then got in and were driven a long distance through the town, with omnibuses and other carriages all full of passengers, preceding and following them, until they came to the pier.

Here a great scene of bustle and excitement awaited them. A large steamer was lying at the pier, blowing off a column of steam from her steam-pipe, with a hissing sound which was almost deafening. The deck of the steamer and the pier were filled with groups of people, many of them families with children of all ages, going to make a visit to the sea shore on the Isle of Wight. An immense quantity of luggage was lying in apparent confusion on the pier,

and a number of porters were busy conveying it on board. Some people were exploring the pile of luggage which had already been taken over to the deck of the steamer, to see if their trunks had been put on board. Others were looking over the confused mass on the pier, in order to find their own parcels and packages, and seemed very uneasy and impatient to get the porters to take them over the plank, as if they thought that unless they had their things put in soon they would be left behind.

These were inexperienced travellers—persons who had seldom been away from home-or else nervous and excitable people that never learn to take things coolly.

The coachman took off the trunks and parcels belonging to Grimkie's party, and set them down upon the pier. Grimkie then paid him, and he went away.

"Now, Johnny," said Grimkie, "you may remain here with the trunks while I go and take Auntie and Florence on board, and find a seat for them."

So John established himself upon one of the trunks and waited for Grimkie to return. Grinkie took the small parcels with him. In a short time he came back and found John still sitting on the trunks.

"Now, Grimkie," said John, "you had better get some of the porters to come and take the trunks, or else they will go off and leave them."

"No," said Grimkie. "I don't think there is much danger. Steamers don't generally start off and leave some of the passengers' luggage on the dock."

"At any rate they will leave ours till the very last," said John.

"That is just what I should like," said Grimkie.

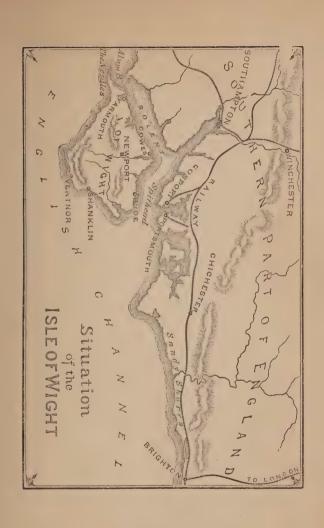
"Just what you would like?" repeated John, much suprised.

"Yes," said Grimkie, "for the last that is put on board on this side will be likely to be the first to be taken off on the other.

"Besides," said Grimkie, "I find that in travelling the best way is to keep quiet and let things take their own course."

This rule, like all other general rules, is subject to many exceptions, but under such circumstances as those in which Grimkie was now placed, it is an excellent rule to follow, and if all pleasure travellers would follow it they would be saved a very large portion of that restless anxiety and uneasiness and mental irritation by which the enjoyment of many persons on journeys is so seriously curtailed.

In due time two porters came to where Grimkie and John were standing, and asked if that luggage was to go on board, and on John's saying that it was, they at once took it up, and the two boys followed to see where the trunks were placed. They then went off to where Mrs. Morelle and Florence were sitting. In a very few minutes the last bell rung, a great many ladies and gentlemen who had come on board to take leave of their friends, went back to the pier, the lines were cast off, the paddle wheels began to revolve, and the steamer, after moving majestically around, began to glide swiftly over the water for ard Ryde.





CHAPTER VII.

THE VOYAGE.

Nothing can be more charming than the little voyage across from Portsmouth to Ryde, on a bright summer's day, in one of the pretty steamers that ply to and fro between these two ports, carrying families and parties of pleasure across on their way to the various places of resort, so much frequented by the English people. on the shores of that wonderful island. The shores of the main land, which you leave behind you, are very picturesque and beautiful. There is the large town of Portsmouth in full view, with the entrance to the harbor, and the castles and forts, and long lines of batteries, with their green slopes of grass so regular and perfect in their form and finish, and so neatly kept-with embrasures here and there from which the mouths of cannon peep out in all directions. In each direction along the coast, too, detached castles and light-houses are seen, and farther in the interior the verdant scenery of England,

with the spires of churches rising here and there among the trees.

Then the sheet of water over which you sail is on the borders of the celebrated anchorage of Spithead, the great rendezvous of the English navy. Here lie immense ships of war, riding at anchor. Some have just come in from long cruises in distant seas. Some are just making ready to sail. Others still, too far weakened by age, and long services, and the terrible exposures they have endured in battles and storms, to be sent to sea again, but still fit to do duty as receiving ships, or prison ships, lie on the water dismantled hulks, moored stem and stern in berths that they are never to leave except to be broken up for their copper and iron.

The boats of the men-of-war are continually passing to and fro among these vessels and between them and the shore. It is very pretty to see these boats creeping along over the water, with their six or eight oars on a side all moving exactly together with military precision, and the oarsmen in their naval uniform, bending forward and rising again to the stroke as if they were so many puppets in a machine. Then when they approach the side of the ship, or the landing stairs on the shore, it is curious to see all the oars rise tegether into the air at the same instant,

in obedience to the order of the officer in command, and then fall down again into the boat, to be stowed away.

The town of Cowes, too, which, as will be seen by the map, is not very far from Ryde, has an anchorage ground very near it which is the great rendezvous of the yachts, or pleasure boats, of the English noblemen, and in fair weather, and sometimes even in the most wild and stormy times, these yachts are to be seen swiftly flitting to and fro over all the neighboring waters.

Even the Queen's yacht, which is a very magnificent steamer of the largest class, is sometimes seen passing along the sound formed between the Isle of Wight and the main land. This steamer is so large, and is so richly ornamented, and withal is kept in such perfect condition, that the very aspect of her as she plows her way among the fleets of ordinary shipping impresses you with an idea of regal splendor. She seems herself a queen, and whenever she comes in view she at once arrests the attention of all beholders

It happened, as has already been said, that the morning was very calm when our party made the passage across to Ryde, and the water was almost as smooth as glass, so that Mrs. Morello could walk about the deck almost as if she had been upon dry land, and enjoy the views in all directions. There were pleasant seats, too, in various places about the decks, -and not too many passengers. Of these last nearly all seemed to be going to the Isle of Wight for pleasure. There were young men with opera glasses, or spy glasses, by means of which they watched and scrutinized the ships at anchor, or the vachts that were moving very slowly here and there over the water, their sails lying idly against the masts for want of wind, or explored the shores of the Isle of Wight which were now rapidly drawing near. These glasses they carried, when they were not using them, in leathern cases which were suspended over their shoulders by straps and buckles.

There were other young men who were provided with knapsacks as if they were going to make a pedestrian tour, and children armed with little shovels to dig with in the sand, and nets for catching fishes and other such things, and young ladies with guide-books and maps by means of which they were attempting to identify the most prominent headlands and other remarkable features of the scenery which came into view. One of the most important objects of this kind in the opinion of many of the passengers was the group of towers marking the situa-

tion of Osborne, the marine villa of the Queen, which stands back among the trees on rising ground not far from the shore, between Ryde and Cowes.

"Grimkie," said Mrs. Morelle, after the steamer had been going for about twenty minutes on her way, "we must be coming pretty near the land. Do you suppose I could go forward and have a view of Ryde?"

Grimkie said he would go and see. So he went forward and very soon returned saying that his aunt and Florence could go forward without any difficulty, and that Ryde was in full view.

So Grimkie led the way and his aunt and Florence followed him through a narrow passage way between the wheel house on one side and the engine room, which occupied the centre, when suddenly the shore of the island and the town of Ryde came full into view.

Opposite the centre of the town was a very long pier, which seemed to project a great way into the water, and about the end of it were clustered several steamers and other vessels

The town itself occupied the slope of a hill which extended for a mile or two along the shore. Tiers of houses were seen rising one above another from among gardens and groves

of trees, with a range of pretty hills beyond. The line of the shore on each side of the pier, was marked by a sea wall. On one side of the pier there was a long range of handsome houses, the fronts of which faced the sea and seemed to be very near to it; while in the other direction there were gardens and pleasure grounds extending down from the houses to the water.

"That must be the famous Ryde pier," said

Mrs. Morelle, pointing to the pier.

"Yes, auntie," said Grimkie, "that must be it. But it does not look so long as I thought it would be."

"How long is it?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"It is half a mile long," said Grimkie, "and that is monstrous for a pier. We are making right for the head of it."

"Yes," said John, "that is where we are

going to land."

The reason why the pier did not look so long as Grimkie had expected, was that at the point of view from which they saw it, it was foreshortened, as artists say—that is, its length was concealed by its being looked at endwise, and from nearly the same level.

CHAPTER VIII.

RYDE PIER.

In places where there is no harbor, and where the shores are formed of shelving sands, there is only one way of providing for the landing of passengers from vessels, to save the trouble of sending them on shore in boats through the surf, and that is by building out a long pier over the sands until you come to deep water.

This is what has been done at Ryde, and the shoals and sands extend out so far, and the pier is consequently so long—the place, too, being one which is visited by such vast numbers of educated, refined, and fashionable people, who talk and write a great deal about what they have seen, and thus disseminate information concerning it far and wide—that the Ryde pier is perhaps the most celebrated, or at least the most talked of, structure, of the kind in the world.

While Mrs. Morelle and the children were gazing at the pier, the steamer came slowly up to the end of it, and was soon made fast, and a broad plank was passed over to the landing

place. To the great surprise of all the party. they found that the end of the pier was a very large and complicated structure, two or three stories high, as it were, with landing stages at different levels, suited to the varying heights of the water, and broad stairways leading from them up to the top.

As soon as the plank was laid the passengers began to crowd forward, all eager, apparently, to be the first to land, as if they imagined that if they did not make haste the steamer would go off and carry them away again.

Grimkie held back with his party until the pressure had passed away, and then moved slowly forward. They all crossed the broad plank, and then began to go up the stairway, which was built in among the open frame-work of the pier in a very curious manner. Below they could see the green waters of the sea, and masses of sea-weed floating to and fro, as the gentle swell made by the paddles rolled in among the piles which formed the foundation of the structure.

"What are you going to do about the luggage, Grimkie?" asked Florence.

"Nothing," said Grimkie.

When the party came up to the top of the pier they found a broad expanse of flooring formed of planks, which covered a sort of T that was built across the end of the pier, in order to enlarge it, and to make landing places for different steamers on different sides, and also to give room for the carriages, and the piles of luggage, and the large groups of passengers and visitors on the top. There were a great many of these visitors on the pier at this time, and a number of carriages standing in different parts of the platform, but all these carriages were man-carriages, as the children called them, for no horses ever come out on the pier.

Of course there were no horse carts, but there were plenty of hand carts, with porters wearing brass tickets upon their breasts, ready to take the luggage up to town as soon as it should be landed from the steamer.

"Now, auntie," said Grimkie, "I will get a carriage for you, and you can take your seat in it and amuse yourself by watching what is going on, until the luggage is landed. Or, if you prefer, you can go right up to the hotel and wait there till we come."

"No," said Mrs. Morelle, "I would rather wait here."

So Grimkie beckoned to one of the carriage men, and he brought up a carriage, and Mrs. Morelle took her seat in it. The back was turned down so that she could see in all directions. Indeed, it was much like sitting in a large arm-chair on wheels. Mrs. Morelle spread her parasol over her head, and sitting herself comfortably in her seat, she said:

"There! Now I don't care how long the baggage is in coming!"

"Florence," said John, "look there! See what a funny summer-house. Let's go and sit in it."

What John called a summer-house, was, indeed, a very curious looking structure. It was in the form of two very high and close fences made about twenty feet long, and crossing each other at right angles, so as to make four square corners, opening to the four points of the compass. There was a roof above and seats at the sides of each division. By means of this contrivance visitors could always find a sheltered place to sit in and look out over the sea, or over the sands, whichever way the wind was blowing. There were other seats besides this in various parts of the great platform, many of which were occupied by ladies and gentlemen, who had come down to sit at the end of the pier and enjoy the views of the sea, and to watch the steamers going out or coming in.

Some of these persons were nurses, who were

employed in knitting or sewing while the children, who were intrusted to their charge, were playing around them. There was no danger of the children falling off the pier, for there was a good strong railing all around except where the staircases went down to the different landings. In some cases there were young ladies reading what seemed to be entertaining books, though they looked off occasionally to observe what was going on around them. In others there were elderly gentlemen to be seen who had established themselves in comfortable corners, with newspapers or magazines in their hands, which they occupied themselves in reading from time to time, and persons with spy glasses or opera glasses examining the shipping at anchor, or the yachts slowly creeping over the water, or the opposite coasts of England.

Florence and John looked about observing these things for a little time until the baggage was put upon one of the hand carts.

"Where are these trunks to go, sir?" said the porter.

"To the hotel," said Grimkie.

Grimkie had unfortunately forgotten to inquire for the best hotel in Ryde, and he suddenly recollected that he had not decided which to go to, when the porter was putting the trunks

upon his cart. So he simply said "to the hotel," supposing that if there was one principal hotel, decidedly superior to the others, the porter would understand of course that that was the one that was meant. If the porter, however, had asked him which hotel, he would then ask him which was the best, and after the porter had named one or two he was going to direct him to go to the nearest.

The porter, however, was satisfied with the first answer, and so simply replied, "Very well,

sir," and moved on with his load.

The man who was drawing Mrs. Morelle in the carriage followed immediately, and Florence and the two boys walked along by her side. Grimkie offered to procure a carriage for Florence too, but she said she would rather walk. Thus arranged, the party began to move on up the pier, forming part of a long train of similar carriages and hand carts proceeding toward the town, and conveying other passengers and other trunks which had arrived in the steamer.

Of course, the pier being nearly half a mile long, it was quite a walk to the end of it. It was not very wide, there being just space enough for the line of carts and carriages in the middle, and a broad walk for pedestrians on each side. There were sheltered seats here and there at



ARRIVAL AT THE HOTEL AT RYDE.



intervals, and now and then a flight of stairs leading down to the water.

The water on each side of the pier grew gradually more and more shallow toward the land, and in one place the boys were astonished to see some carts standing in it alongside a vessel, and taking coal from the vessel to haul to the land. The wheels of these carts were more than half submerged, and the legs and about one third of the bodies of the horses were also under water.

At length the party came to the end of the pier and all passed through a sort of toll gate with a toll house upon one side where there was a toll to pay of so much for each trunk and so much for each passenger. There was a great crowd of people outside waiting to see the passengers by the steamer come from the pier. There was a large open space here and a very handsome hotel facing it, with coaches that were about setting off to various parts of the Island. Over the principal entrance of the hotel was inscribed in large letters the name Pier Hotel.

CHAPTER IX.

A WALK AT RYDE.

The hotel, as will be seen by the engraving in the last chapter, was delightfully situated just at the head of the pier. The housekeeper gave Mrs. Morelle and her party a suite of rooms on the second floor, looking out over the water. One of these rooms was a nice little parlor, which opened out upon one of the balconies which you see in the engraving on the side of the hotel facing the sea. This balcony, of course, commanded a charming view of the pier, of the anchorage at Spithead and all the ships lying in it, and also of the whole range of the coast of England beyond.

John was out upon this piazza within five minutes after he came into the room, and he could not be satisfied until his mother and Florence came out. They were both enchanted, not only with the extent, but also with the life and beauty of the view. By looking southward along the coast they could see the towers of the royal villa at Osborne rising up among the trees.

You can see these towers in the engraving. They appear faintly in the horizon, in the distance toward the right, not far from the point of land which terminates the view in that direction. Cowes is round beyond that point of land, and you see in the engraving a steamer coming from Cowes to Ryde.

By looking through a glass Grimkie could make out a flag flying from the flagstaff on one of the towers of Osborne.

"Look, Florence, look!" said Grimkie, giving Florence the glass. "There's the flag flying, and that shows that the queen is at Osborne now."

Mrs. Morelle soon took the glass to look at the flag, and also to get a nearer view of the towers. She said she thought that the view which the queen had from her palace must be much the same as that which they enjoyed from their hotel.

"It can't be so good, mother," said Florence, "for there is no pier for her. The pier is the best part of the view here, especially when the steamers are going out and coming in, for then it is full of people and carriages."

Mrs. Morelle soon went back from the bal-

cony into the parlor, saying that she must ga into her bedroom and prepare for dinner.

"How long are we to stay at this hotel, Florence?" said she.

"That is just as you please, mother," said Florence. "We can stay here, or we can take lodgings—or we need not remain in Ryde at all unless we like, but can go on to some of the other places."

"I leave it all to you," said Mrs. Morelle.
"You have arranged it very nicely thus far, and I have had a very pleasant time; and I have no doubt you will arrange it just as well in time to come."

"But you might give us your advice," said Florence.

"Well," said Mrs. Morelle, "I will. And I advise you if you can find any *pleasanter* rooms than these, and a *finer* view, in lodgings anywhere, to take them."

"We will go and take a walk by and by, Florence," said Grimkie, "and see."

Mrs. Morelle said that she would not take a walk herself that day, but would remain in her rooms till dinner time, and the children might do as they pleased. So she went into her bedroom. There she found her trunk unstrapped and placed upon a trunk-stand, at a convenient

height to give her easy access to the interior of it without stooping.

There was a very nicely dressed and pretty looking chambermaid in the room, ready to wait upon Mrs. Morelle, and Grimkie, after unlocking her trunk, left her in the chambermaid's charge, and he and Florence and John went out to take a walk and see the town.

As they came out upon the broad open space in front of the hotel they saw before them a wide road extending along the shore, with a low stone wall on one side, toward the sea, and a range of splendid houses, with gardens before them, on the other. There was a very spacious sidewalk or promenade between the carriage road and the wall, with seats here and there which commanded fine views of the sea. This was what was called the Esplanade.

The children walked a little way on in this direction, and then at Florence's suggestion they concluded to go back and find a street leading up the hill through the heart of the town.

"I want to see what there is in the shop-windows," said she.

"And besides that," she added, "we must look out for lodgings. Mother said she would like to go into lodgings, in case we could find any pleasanter place." "Any place with a pleasanter view," said Grimkie.

"Well," rejoined John, "that's the same thing."

"No," said Florence, "that's a very different thing. The place itself might be pleasant and not the view."

By this time the children had turned and were now going back toward the hotel. Pretty near the hotel they found a street turning off from the shore and leading directly up the hill. The ascent was quite abrupt, but the street itself was a very lively and pleasant one, with pretty shops and coffee-rooms on each side of it, and a great many engravings of the scenery of the Isle of Wight, and curiosities of different kinds obtained from different parts of the island, exposed to view in the windows. The children walked along slowly, examining all these things and considering what they would like to buy. John was very eager to go in at once and buy some of the things; but Florence recommended to him to wait until he had gone through the whole street and seen them all, so as to make a better selection.

Among other things to be seen in the windows were some curious looking pictures, representing cottages, cliffs, groups of people and

other subjects appropriate to the island, all executed in sand! It may seem surprising that pictures of any kind could be executed in such a material as this, and the children were for a time much puzzled with the appearance of the pictures, and wondered what they were, and how they were made.

The explanation is this. There is in a certain part of the island a deep bay called Alum Bay, where the cliffs, which are very lofty and steep, are formed of layers of different colored sands, many of the colors being very bright and beautiful. There are layers of red sand, and brown sand, and black sand, and green sand, and many other colors.

There is a cliff somewhat of this character in this country. It forms the termination of the island of Martha's Vineyard, and is called Gay Head, on account of the brilliant and beautiful appearance it makes when the sun is shining upon it.

There are various ways by which they make pictures of these sands. The children amused themselves with making some when they went to visit Alum Bay, and how they did it will be described in its proper place.

After ascending the hill for some time the children passed by the region of shops and came

to a place where several streets diverged in different directions, and here and there were a great many pretty private houses, besides churches and hotels. Many of these houses had the sign APARTMENTS FURNISHED in the windows, but they proved that the distinction which Florence had drawn between a house being pretty in itself, and commanding a pretty view, was very correct, for these houses, though some of them were situated in the midst of gardens, and formed of themselves charming pictures as seen from the street, still could have afforded from their windows only a distant and interrupted view of the sea.

"Besides," said John, "we could not see the pier from any of these houses, and there would be no pleasure at all in living in a house where we could not see the pier."

After going on a little further the children found that they were getting out of the town, for they came to large gardens enclosed in high walls with lofty hedges rising above the copings, and parks with the pretty little lodges at the park gates, and beautiful views of winding avenues and green lawns seen through the openings.

There were a great many handsome carriages to be seen passing to and fro among these villas, with ladies elegantly dressed riding in them, and pompous looking coachmen, wearing powdered wigs on the boxes, and footmen in livery behind. The children had seen several of these carriages in the streets of the town, and now, in the environs they saw them going in and coming out at the park gates of the various villas.

They also met gentlemen on horseback from time to time. Some riding alone, others had a servant mounted on another horse riding at a little distance behind.

When the children found they had gone as far as their time would allow they turned and went back. They tried to find some other way of going home, but could not do so. Indeed, there seemed to be but one principal street leading up the hill, though, as it approached the top, it branched off in various directions. Near one of these places of embranchment was a large and very pretty inn, with one or two coaches at the door that had just come in from the interior. On the sides of these coaches were inscribed various well known Isle of Wight names, such as Shanklin Chine, Newport, Brading and others. The children stopped to look at one of these coaches.

"Ah," said John, "I wish we were just going to set off in that coach to have a jour asy, -- and I on the top."

"Brading!" said Florence, reading the name upon the coach. "That's where the dairyman's daughter lived. I should like to go to Brading."

"Very well," said John. "You have only to

say the word. You are queen."

Pretty soon the coachman came out from the inn, and mounted the box and drove away, and then the children went on down the hill and returned to the hotel.

"Now, Florence," said John, as they entered the large hall or passage way of the hotel, and looked up at the clock, "you have brought us home too soon. It won't be dinner time for half an hour."

"How long before dinner do you think mother would begin to expect us?" asked Florence.

"I don't know," said John:

"I thought about half an hour," said Florence.

"Well, and what then?" asked John.

"I thought it would be better for us to be at home, not only in time for us to get our dinners, but in time to save mother all uneasiness in expecting us."

"Ah!" said John, "I expect you are planning to be queen again some day."

"I am," said Florence.

CHAPTER X.

PLEASURES OF RYDE.

Mrs. Morelle had been told by some young ladies that she had seen at Brighton, that Ryde was the most charming place on the Isle of Wight.

"Indeed," said they, "it is the only place worth visiting. We have been all over the island—at Shanklin, at Ventnor, at Freshwater Bay, and all those places, and they are dreadfully dull. As for Newport, it is perfectly intolerable."

Now, when any person gives you an opinion in respect to any places which you have not seen, the question whether you will agree with them or not will depend upon what it is they like or dislike the places for, and whether the considerations which lead you to like or dislike places are the same with theirs.

It happened that these young ladies lived in very high and fashionable life, and their whole happiness consisted in dress and display—in balls, parties, concerts, and elegant picnic excur-

sions, managed by gay and handsome young men, and Ryde is just the place for all these things. It is the great resort of all the wealthy and fashionable people, and those who are fond of high life, and of dress and fashion, and who are, moreover, of a rank and position in society to be freely admitted to the first circles in Ryde, enjoy the time they spend there very highly. If they are young and handsome ladies, so as to receive a great deal of attention wherever they go, it is charming to them to meet so many people of rank from all parts of the kingdom, and to be courted and admired by so many handsome young officers and noblemen. All such persons, after spending a month at Ryde, go away with very exalted ideas of the charms and fascinations of the place, and are very enthusiastic in their praises of it.

The vicinity of the queen's marine villa at Osborne adds very much to the interest of the place for this class of persons. Even if they are not exalted enough in their position to enjoy the privilege of visiting at Osborne, they meet in society many persons who do; and to see and talk with persons who have seen and talked with the queen, is a very great privilege in the estimation of so loyal a class as the English ladies of fashion.

Besides, they can, at any rate, attend services on Sundays at the little parish church at Whippingham, a small village near Osborne, and about five miles from Ryde, and in so doing have a chance of being under the same roof with her majesty, who often attends divine service there.

For all these reasons, gay and fashionable ladies generally find Ryde a very charming place "in the season."

But those who go to the Isle of Wight for retirement or repose, or to enjoy the sea, or to be impressed with the sublime grandeurs of the cliffs and the downs—and also those who, though they have a fondness for fashionable life, have not access to the high society of Ryde—go away with very different impressions of the place. The time which they spend in it is passed in a state of weariness or of vexation, and with the exception of the lively scenes to be witnessed on the pier, and which, though very exciting at first, soon lose their special interest, they find little to entertain them there, and soon desire to go away.

As for Mrs. Morelle, she spent her time very pleasantly indeed for three days. She took two very pleasant drives into the surrounding country—once along the sea shore and once into the inte-

rior. She also walked through the streets twice, and was much interested in going into the shops and looking at the various objects of interest pertaining to the island, which were for sale in them, such as engravings of Isle of Wight scenery, pictures made of the sands of Alum Bay, crystals and other beautiful minerals, collections of sea-weeds, and also of flowers and plants growing on the island, all very nicely preserved and put up in books or in frames with glass to protect them from injury.

Mrs. Morelle bought some of these things, and the children also made some purchases. Florence bought some of the sand pictures, and also some brilliant crystals, which were called Isle of Wight diamonds.

Grimkie did not buy any of the sand pictures for he said he meant to get some of the sand when they went to Alum Bay, and make pictures for himself. He, however, bought a set of geological specimens showing the character of the different mineral formations of the island. He also bought a very pretty embossed geological map, showing in relief all the cliffs and mineral ranges, and the different kinds of rocks, and the strata of sand and gravel which come out to view in the different regions.

He observed by this map that there were two

great masses of the chalk formation, as it is called, in the island, one passing through it from east to west, ending in the two capes which form the extremities of the land in those directions. The other mass formed great swells of land at the southern side.

"Those are the downs," said Grimkie, as he was showing John his map. "We shall go up on the downs and you will see what a curious region it is."

"Are they mountains?" asked Florence.

"Not exactly mountains," said Grimkie, "but great swells of land, smooth and nearly level on the top, with no trees and no houses, and the ground covered every where with short and fine grass, and little flowers that make a carpet as soft as velvet.

"I should like to go there very much," said Florence.

"When the downs come near the sea," added Grimkie. "we can have such magnificient views. The sea wears away the chalk and undermines it, and then what is above falls down and forms cliffs so high that you don't dare to go near the brink at all."

"I dare," said John.

"You will see," said Grimkie. "And besides the danger of falling, the sea birds that build their nests in the cliffs will think you are coming to get their eggs, and they will fly screaming around you and try to pick your eyes out."

"I'll shoot them," said John, speaking up very valiantly. "Or if I had an umbrella I would open it suddenly and flap it in their faces, and frighten them half to death."

After about three days the whole party were well satisfied with what they had seen of Ryde, and were very ready to move on. The question was which way to go. Florence, as queen, was to decide this question. Mrs. Morelle said she had nothing to say about it. She was sure that it would be to some pleasant place or other, and it was immaterial to her in what order the pleasant places were taken.

"You can consult your ministers, if you please," said she, "but you must hold your consultation by yourselves out of my hearing, for I want to finish my book."

Mrs. Morelle had obtained a very interesting book at the circulating library, and was sitting, when she said this, near a window which commanded a charming view of the pier and of the sea, so that she could amuse herself in the pauses of her reading by looking out over the water and seeing what new steamers or ships had come in sight, or what changes had taken place in those that were in sight before, since the last time that she had observed them.

She also, while stopping here, had an opportunity of watching the firing of a salute from a battery at Portsmouth. The distance was so great that a very considerable interval elapsed, after the flash and the smoke of each gun were seen, before the sound of the report reached herear.

CHAPTER XI.

ABOUT CHINES.

When the queen opened her consultation with her ministers on the question of the next move to be made by the party—which she did seated in the sheltered compartment of the funny summer-house, as John called it, near the end of the pier—John proposed at once that they should go to the Black Gang Chine.

He had no idea what Black Gang Chine was or where it was, but there was something in the name that struck his fancy.

"That does not come next," said Grimkie.
"Shanklin Chine comes next in our way. And besides Shanklin Chine is a great deal prettier than Black Gang Chine. Black Gang Chine is terribly desolate and gloomy place."

"That's exactly the reason why I want to go and see it," said John. "But Grimkie, what is a chine?"

There are a great many chines, as they are called, around the shores of the Isle of Wight, though the only ones that are much talked of

abroad are Shanklin Chine and Black Gang Chine; and as the reader may, like John, not know exactly what a chine is, I will explain it.

It is, in fact, nothing but what we should call in this country a great gulley!

One would not think it possible that there could be any thing attractive or beautiful in a gulley, and yet Shanklin Chine is one of the most wonderful and charming objects in the world.

The case is this. The ground which forms the mass of the Isle of Wight, though in some places it consists of vast beds of chalk, hundreds, and, perhaps, thousands of feet thick, and rising into great swelling ranges of hills hundreds of feet high, and in other parts of other kinds of rocks, is formed in many places of immense beds of sand, of various colors in the different layers, and extending downward to unfathomable depths below the surface, and rising often by the sea to one or two hundred feet above. The sand in these beds is very fine, and the prevailing colors are green and brown. This sand is not loose, but it is half hardened into stone, so that as you see it in the cliffs it has all the appearance of stone, and yet if you break out a lump of it you can crumble it without much difficulty in your hand.

Now, whenever a brook, in flowing down from the up country of the island, comes to the sea at a point where the cliffs are formed of these beds of sand, it is found that it has worn, in the course of ages, an immense ravine or gulley, of the most wild and fantastic form, and these ravines are called chines. There are several of these chines alone the southern coast of the island, but Shanklin Chine is the most beautiful and the most celebrated of them all.

It is nearly a quarter of a mile long, and the sides, which are nearly perpendicular, though full of the most fantastic and picturesque irregularities, are more than two hundred feet high. The village, which stands at the head of the chine, is three hundred feet above the sea. There is a winding and zigzag road which goes down the shore north of the chine, but through the chine itself there is only a foot-path. Visitors usually go down through the chine by the path, and then return up the cliffs outside by the winding road which follows certain natural hollows and valleys in a very picturesque and pretty manner.

But the great charm of the chine, and of the environs of it, is the vegetation. There seems to be some principle of fertility in these sands, indurated as they are, which causes them to produce

the most luxuriant vegetation, even in places where the surface left by the cutting and wearing of the water is absolutely perpendicular. The consequence is that the whole interior of the chine, with all its cliffs, and chasms, and deep recesses, and perpendicular walls, and dark branching ravines, are all covered with a beautiful and most luxuriant growth of mosses, ferns, wild flowers, shrubs, and overhanging trees, which make the whole immense ravine one of the most charming, as well as one of the most wonderful, dells in the world.

At the head of the chine, as has already been intimated, is a village, with several pretty hotels, and many charming cottages, all in the midst of beautiful gardens, and many of them entirely enveloped in climbing vines, and blooming all over with flowers. It was one of the hotels in this village that had so strongly attracted the attention of the children at Brighton, and which is shown in the frontispiece.

At the foot of the chine, along the beach under the cliffs, is a row of houses resorted to in the summer by those who wish to be all the near the shore. Here are little shops for the sale of playthings for the children, and for Isle of Wight curiosities, and bathing houses, and other conveniences of this kind.

Florence did not know all that I have here explained about the Shanklin Chine when she decided to go there next; but she knew that it was a very celebrated place, and also that it was there that they were to expect to find the famous thatch-roofed hotel. And as it was moreover directly on the way to other parts of the island, particularly to the Undercliff, the name given to the range of shore along the southern extremity of the island, which she knew was a great place of resort, it seemed pretty plain that Shanklin was the place to go to next.

CHAPTER XII.

RIDE TO SHANKLIN.

As soon as the place to go to was decided upon, the question that next arose was in regard to the mode of going.

"Is there a railroad?" said Florence, inquir-

ing of Grimkie.

"No," said Grimkie, "there is not a railroad on the Isle of Wight. Somebody told me they had a plan of one from Cowes to Newport, but the queen objected to it."

"Objected to it!" exclaimed John, astonished.

"Object to a railroad!"

"Yes," said Grimkie. She thought it would disturb the repose and seclusion of her villa at Osborne."

"Hm!" exclaimed John, in a tone of contempt.

"Is there a steamboat?" asked Florence.

"No," said Grimkie. "There is no place at Shanklin for any steamboat to land. In fact, there is no landing place for a steamboat any where on the island, except on the north side,

and only three places there, Yarmouth, and Cowes, and Ryde. Sometimes steamers make excursions round the island with parties of pleasure, to let the people see the shores, but they can't land."

"Then how can we go?" asked Florence.

"We can go in the stage-coach," replied Grimkie, "or we can take a carriage."

"I vote for going in the coach," said John, "It is a very pretty coach. I saw it starting off yesterday. There is a nice high seat on top for me."

"And where would be the seat for mother?" asked Florence.

"She might ride on top, too," said John.
"There are very nice seats, and ladies often ride
up there."

"Not ladies—very often," said Grimkie, "only their maids."

"At any rate I have seen *some* ladies ride on the top, I know," said John.

Now an English stage-coach, though it is a very pretty thing in a picture, with its neat and tidy look, its prancing horses, and its smart coachman, is not a very agreeable vehicle for the passengers, except for such as like to be shut up in seclusion where they can neither see nor be seen. Sometimes young American ladies, who,

since they have come to England on purpose to see the country, are determined that they will see it, mount to the top of the coach when they have a short journey to take in a conveyance of this kind in one of those retired and secluded districts where they still linger. But with these exceptions ladies travelling by coach must sit inside, and as there are no windows except a small one over each door, it is only an occasional and a broken glimpse they can obtain of the country they pass through. Florence was very sure that her mother would not like to travel through the Isle of Wight in that way.

So she determined on taking a carriage, and she authorized Grimkie to engage one. Grimkie conferred with Boots on the subject, and finally engaged a large open barouche with a high coachman's box, and room upon it by the side of the coachman for John. There was a rack behind also for the trunks.

These arrangements were made on the Wednesday afternoon, and on Thursday morning about ten o'clock the carriage came to the door.

Mrs. Morelle, when she came to get into it and take her seat, was charmed with the comfort of it, and with the facilities it afforded her for seeing the country all around.

"And I enjoy it all the more," she said, "for

not having had any trouble or care about mak-

ing the preparations."

The landlord and landlady of the hotel, and many of the servants had assembled at the door, according to the English custom, to bid the departing guests good-bye. Grimkie had already paid them all their fees. John mounted on the box by the side of the coachman, Florence took her place by the side of her mother, and Grimkie sat on the front seat.

When all were ready the coachman touched up his horses and off they went.

The ride was charming. The road followed in general the line of the shore, though at some distance from it, and also at a considerable elevation above it. Thus the views which passed before Mrs. Morelle's eyes, as she sat reclining upon her seat, were views of rural scenery, and pretty little hamlets, and roadside churches and inns overshadowed by ancient and venerable trees, and cottages with gardens around them, and woodbine and roses and honeysuckles climbing over the walls.

At some points the road passed over a high headland where, for a short time, there was a magnificent view of the sea, especially from John' elevated seat by the side of the coachman.

A ength, after about two hours, the carriage

arrived at the hotel at Shanklin and drew up at the great porch door at the end.

The landlady, and also a chambermaid and a porter, came immediately to the door to receive the guests. As soon as Mrs. Morelle and Florence had descended from the carriage, the landlady led the way into the house and conducted them to a pretty little sitting-room or parlor, opening toward the lawn at the farther end of the house. There were two bed-rooms connected with this parlor, and a platform outside, with windows opening down to the floor and leading out upon it.

The lawn itself, or rather perhaps it should be called the garden, for little copses of shrubbery and beds and borders of flowers were to be seen in all directions in it, with fountains and statues, and bowers and summer houses, too numerous to be represented in the engraving, but altogether forming a most delightful and very gayly colored yiew.

John was out at once upon this lawn, looking at the flowers and the fountains, and trying the different seats, while his mother and Florence were examining the bed-rooms, and the porter was bringing in their things. In a few minutes Grimkie, who had waited to pay the coachman, came in. He found his aunt and cousin very

much pleased with their rooms, and with the views from the windows.

"It is a charming place," said Mrs. Morelle.
"Florence may stay here a month if she likes."

"I am sure I shall like it," said Florence, "I should like to stay here all summer."

At this moment John came running in from the garden, telling his mother that there were some of the prettiest places to sit in and read, in that garden, that she ever saw.

"And now, mother," said he, "as soon as you have got your trunks open let's go and see the Chine. I have found out the way to it."

"No," said his mother, "not to-day."

"Not to-day!" exclaimed John.

"No," said his mother. "If Florence is going to remain here with her party for some time, as she intimates she shall, I must economize my pleasures, so as to make them last. I can't afford to use up the Chine the first day."

"But Auntie," said Grimkie, "that will be for Florence to decide, won't it? She is queen."

"She is queen in respect to the journey," said Mrs. Morelle, "and controls all arrangements that affect the whole party, but she has nothing to do with the private plans and pursuits of us separately while we are stopping at particular places."

"I thought she was queen altogether," said John.

"She is queen altogether," said Mrs. Morelle.
"That is, she has the management of the public and common affairs of her realm, but not of the private and personal ones. That is the way with all queens."

"For instance," continued Mrs. Morelle, "she can decide to leave here to-morrow and take us all off to Ventnor, and choose whatever inn she rikes there, and decide how long we shall stay,—but while we are there, she would have no power to prevent you and Grimkie taking a boat and going out a fishing if you chose."

"Is Ventnor a good place to go a fishing?"

asked John eagerly.

"I think it is likely," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Then let's go there," said John.

"You must ask Florence about that," said Mrs. Morelle. "She can take you there or not just as she likes,—but after you get there, you and Grimkie can go a fishing or not, just as you like. And so Florence has brought me here, and now I can take my own time about going to see the Chine."

"But, mother," said John, "I wanted to go to-day very much. We shall have plenty of time before dinner." "Very well," said Mrs. Morelle. "You can go whenever you like. Indeed, I think it would be a very good plan for you to go to-day, for so you will learn the way and can better conduct me to-morrow."

John was very much pleased with this proposal, and in a few minutes afterward, the three young people set off to go to the Chine, leaving Mrs. Morelle with a pretty looking chambermaid to wait upon her, in her room.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE HOTEL.

AFTER the children had gone Mrs. Morelle spent a little time in getting settled in her room, and then went out into the garden to see the flowers. A portion of this garden, or rather lawn, for it consisted chiefly of green and smooth slopes of grass, ornamented here and there with little copses of shrubbery, and borders, and beds of flowers, is to be seen in the engraving beyond the corner of the house. Far the larger portion of it, however, is out of view. The grass on this lawn, where grass was allowed to grow, was as soft and smooth as velvet. The surface of the ground had originally been perfectly smooth and quite hard, and the grass which grew upon it was shaved close every two or three days with the scythe, which made it very soft and fine, and the feeling of it to the feet in walking upon it was like that of a rich carpet.

Then there were a great many smooth and pretty gravel walks to be seen running in all directions, following the inequalities of the ground

and winding about among the copses of shrubbery and along the parterres of flowers. Some of these led to pretty bowers, or secluded seats covered with honeysuckles and climbing roses, Some of the paths led up to seats which were placed upon little eminences, and which commanded a fine but not very near view of the sea. The view could not be very near, for the village of Shanklin is near the head of the Chine, and as the Chine is about a quarter of a mile long, the hotel, which was in the margin of the village, was necessarily at that distance from the sea. Besides it was raised high above the sea, too, for the cliffs through which the Chine cuts its way are about two hundred feet high at the shore, and nearly three hundred feet back at the head of the chine, where the village stands. The view of the sea was therefore not a near one, and the ships and steamers, moreover, that were passing by kept off at a great distance from the coast, to avoid the shallow water that is formed along the shore by the sand and debris which result from the undermining and abrasion of the cliffs, and the grinding down of the materials into sand and pebbles by the waves.

In consequence of the ships and steamers being so distant, they appeared, as Mrs. Morelle looked upon them from the seats in the garden,

to be creeping slowly over the surface of the water with an almost insensible motion, although they were really ploughing their way along with a swiftness twice as great as that of the rapid trotting of a horse.

There were several people walking about the grounds of the hotel when Mrs. Morelle went out. There were ladies sitting in shady places reading or sewing, and nurses taking care of children. Some of the paths led back into a wood which extended behind the house, where there were seats under venerable trees, and many smooth and shady places convenient for children to play. In one of these was a group of four or five very nicely dressed children, playing with a large and soft india-rubber ball, and making the woods ring with their shouts of laughter.

It was somewhat curious to observe that the boys on these grounds were hats just like men, only, of course, smaller. It is the custom for boys in England to wear hats, in form precisely like those of men.

The ladies, too, when they are riding on horse-back wear hats of almost precisely the same form.

Mrs. Morelle walked about the grounds a little while, and was very much pleased with the charming manner in which they were arranged and adorned. She passed several ladies in the different walks, but they either took no notice of her whatever, as they passed, or else looked upon her with so ceremonious and haughty an air, that they seemed to intend to notify her expressly beforehand that they did not wish to become acquainted with her, or to have any thing to say to her at all.

Mrs. Morelle walked about the grounds for half an hour or more, examining the shrubbery and flowers and trying the various seats, and then strolled round by the front of the house, and so in by the porch door at which they had descended from the carriage. Besides the opening in this porch to the front, leading toward the road, there was also one in the side, as will be seen in the engraving, where there was a path leading round in front of the house toward the garden and grounds.

After standing at the porch door a few minutes, to see the people and the carriages going to and fro along the road, Mrs. Morelle returned through the hall to her room. While she had been gone, the pretty chambermaid had brought her, according to her request, a number of entertaining books, and after selecting one, which was a bound volume of a magazine, full of stories and pretty engravings, she sat down in a

comfortable arm-chair in her window, where she could read at her ease, and in the intervals of her reading could survey, by just lifting up her eyes from her book, all that was going on upon the grounds, and could also see what was passing on the sea, a distant view of which her window commanded. The first time that she looked she saw a large ship with all sails spread, and a steamer, which she knew by the smoke—although it was so distant that she could see little besides the smoke—and also several sail-boats which were nearer.

This glimpse of the sea and of the vessels upon it was seen through an opening in the trees, as is shown in the engraving.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE DOWNS.

It was about three o'clock when Mrs. Morelle sat down at her work, and precisely at four the waiter came in to set the table for dinner, which had been ordered for five. Not long after this the children came home.

"Well, children," said Mrs. Morelle. "How

do you like the Chine?"

"We have not been to the Chine at all," said Florence, "we have been up on the Downs. It was so calm this afternoon that Grimkie said it was a fine time to go up on the Downs. It is very bad being in such high places on windy days, but we can go down the Chine on a windy day just as well as not."

"Because, you see," added John, "that there

we are all sheltered."

If you look forward to the engraving near the middle of the next chapter you will see the Downs where Florence and the others went. It is that broad expanse of swelling and undulating

land seen extending into the interior from the top of the chalk cliffs in the back ground of the picture.

There are sometimes a few clumps of small trees or bushes on the Downs, but generally they are bare of foliage, and only covered with short grass, very smooth and soft to walk upon.

Or, if you do not wish to walk upon the grass, there are generally sheep tracks running over the ground in various directions, which will conduct you wherever you wish to go.

These cliffs are much more lofty, in fact, than they appear to be in the engraving. Indeed, it is almost impossible to give any idea in engravings, of such grand elevations and vast magnitudes as the chalky cliffs of England often present to view. The cliffs near Shanklin, especially those a little south of the town, where one of the great chalk beds that traverse the island come out to the sea, are very high indeed, and the wind, when there is any wind, is apt to blow very furiously there. When there is only a gentle breeze in the village there is usually quite a gale on the Downs, and Grimkie was accordingly very considerate in recommending to Florence, when he found how calm it was that afternoon, as shown not only by the motionless condicion of the leaves upon the trees, but on the

smooth and glassy appearance of the surface of the sea, that she should improve the opportunity to ascend the cliffs.

Very soon after passing the confines of the village, Florence and her party came to a place where on the side of the road toward the sea there was a gateway leading through a paling, and a glimpse of a vast chasm below, though the trees and shrubbery were so dense that they could see but very little way down. There was a little lodge over the gateway, or rather by the side of it, and a girl inside as if in charge of the entrance.

Grimkie told Florence that that must be the entrance to the Chine, and asked her if she wished to go and look down.

"No," said she, "I would rather save it all until I am ready to go down."

"I mean to go and peep," said John. "I am going down the stairs two or three steps, and then I will come and catch up with you."

So John ran to the gateway. He could see the upper steps of a flight of stairs leading down into the chasm. He was going through the gate, in order to descend these steps a little way, when the girl held out her hand to him with,

"Sixpence, if you please, sir."

[&]quot;Sixpence," said John. "What for?"

"That is what is to pay to go in' the Chine,' said the girl.

This demand was so sudden upon poor John that he was quite bewildered by it. Fer a moment he looked the girl in the face, not knowing what to say, and then, on the excellent principle that when you do not know what to say it is best to say nothing, he turned round and ran off to overtake Grimkie and Florence as fast as he could go.

When he had overtaken them they all walked along the high road for some distance. The road soon turned back away from the sea to follow a valley which led into the interior, the cliffs near the sea in that direction being altogether too high for a public road to go over them.

They soon came to a place where there was a path that branched off from the main road and led up the heights. The pathway led up a very steep acclivity, but was dry and hard, and the ascent was not very difficult, though it was somewhat long; and John, who began, as small boys usually do in going up a mountain, by running, soon became tired and out of breath, and was obliged to sit down and rest, and though Florence and Grimkie, who had proceeded more slowly, when they came up to him were well able to go on, they were obliged to wait a little while

for him to get rested or else to go on themselves, and leave him behind.

They concluded to wait for him, and pretty soon they all went on together. When, at last, they reacned the summit a very grand view gradually opened before them. All around was the swelling surface of the Down covered everywhere with a smooth and even turf, which it was delightful to walk upon. Below them to the left lay the village of Shanklin, with the hotel surrounded with its gardens in full view, and the spire of the little church rising above the trees. They could also see the form of the Chine which appeared from this distance like a little valley embosomed in trees.

Beyond was the sea with a great number of sail boats and row boats near the shore, and several large ships and steamers in the offing. The sails, however, of all the vessels that carried sails, hung drooping from the masts, as there was searcely a breath of wind.

"That great ship out there is an East Indiaman, I'll bet," said John, "coming in from sea and bound to Southampton."

"She may be an Indiaman coming in from sea," said Grimkie, "but she can hardly be bound for Southampton, for in that case she would not be here outside the Isle of Wight,

She would have gone in by the Needles and so up the Solent."

"Then she is bound for London," said John.

"That may be," said Grimkie.

By looking again at the map the reader will see that Grimkie was right. I rather suspect that in making this remark John was actuated, unconsciously perhaps, by a desire to show off his nautical knowledge. But boys when they attempt to say any thing for the purpose of showing how much they know, are very apt to fail of their end, and only show how little they know.

There was a small sail-boat out at a great distance over the water. It lay there apparently motionless, except that there was a slight glittering appearance in the water by the side of it to be seen, which was repeated at regular intervals, like a pulsation. Florence's attention was attracted to this phenomena, which made quite a pretty appearance, and she asked Grimkie what it meant.

"They are becalmed out there," said he, "and have got out their sweeps."

"Their sweeps?" repeated Florence.

"Yes," said Grimkie; "large oars. There is no wind and they can't get home, and they are trying to work their way back with sweeps.

Like as not it is a party of excursionists from Shanklin, who have gone out for a sail and now can't get home."

After remaining upon the Downs more than an hour, and rambling about over a great many of the higher eminences, and obtaining many different views, each one more extended and grand than the preceding, the party returned to the hotel, as has been already related, where they gave Mrs. Morelle a full account of their excursion.

From their description of what they had seen Mrs. Morelle said she thought she should like the Downs better than the Chine.

"The very first day that is calm I will go up," said Mrs. Morelle, "if you would be willing to go up again to show me the way."

Mrs. Morelle then told John that there was a question to be settled about his room.

"There are two bedrooms, either of which you and Grimkie can have," said she. "One is a large and convenient one, but has no view, the other is small and inconvenient, but there is a very pretty lookout from the window."

"Let's go and see the rooms, Grimkie," said John.

So they went. They found the rooms to be just as Mrs. Morelle had described them. The

large one was near Mrs. Morelle's room. It had two windows, but they looked out upon a part of the garden where there was nothing to be seen but trees and shrubbery which grew there pretty close to the house. The other room was up in the second story, almost over the porch which formed the entrance to the hotel. There was only one window to this room, and that was of the kind called a dormer window. It looked out upon the street, and upon the village. You can see this window in the picture, with John looking out of it.

"This is the best room, Grimkie. Let us take this room. We can see all the carriages that come to the hotel, and watch all the people when they are getting out."

"When we are in our room," suggested Grimkie. "We shall be out of our room almost all the day time rambling about."

"But there may be a rainy day," said John.

"Very well," said Grimkie, "we will take this soom."

CHAPTER XV.

DOWN THE CHINE.

THE next morning, not long after breakfast, Mrs. Morelle and her whole party set out to go and visit the Chine.

When they reached the entrance Grimkie paid to the girl who served as porter sixpence a piece for the whole party, which made two shillings in all. They all passed through the gate and began to descend a steep staircase which led down into the ravine. Not far from the place where they were going down there was a brook going down, too—only the brook did not descend gently, by degrees, as visitors did, but by one single pitch fell fifty or a hundred feet, into a boiling cauldron below.

As soon as the party had descended a little way, perhaps thirty or forty feet, they came to a platform, and there they stopped to look about them. They found themselves in the midst of a vast ravine of the wildest and most irregular form, with precipitous walls, and vast overhanging projections, and peaks, and branching

chasms, and shelving terraces at various heights, all having the forms belonging to cliffs and chasms of rocks, but yet clothed every where with such a thick covering of vegetation—mosses, lichens, ferns, vines, and climbing plants of every kind, with trees and shrubbery in every angle and on every shelf and ledge, and long trailing plants hanging in festoons from their branches, that the whole scene presented the aspect of a garden, only the plants and flowers were growing on perpendicular precipices, and on cliffs and chasms of every conceivable fantastic form, instead of upon smooth and level ground.

Down through the centre of the chasm there was a wide and well made pathway, which twisted and turned this way and that, now crossing the brook by a rustic bridge, now ascending a steep bank and getting lost a moment in a thicket, now running along upon the brink of a shelving projection, and now sending off a branch to a seat or a summer house built upon a commanding point which afforded a view of some peculiarly picturesque or striking portion of the chasm.

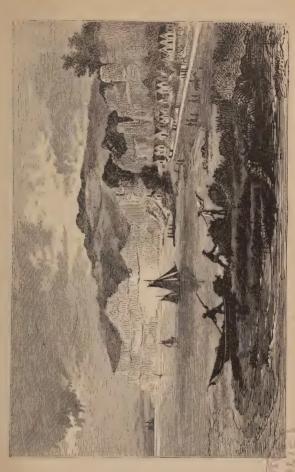
The party walked along the path very slowly, and examined carefully every thing they saw. They stopped at all the seats, and Florence gathered a number of little sprigs of moss and

delicate flowers to press in her guide-book, with the intention of preserving them as souvenirs of Shanklin Chine.

At length they came to the outlet of the chasm, where it opened upon the beach which extends here, under the cliffs, along the margin of the sea. Here they found quite a little street, which led along under the cliffs, and a row of small shops, bathing-houses, lodging-houses, and other buildings on the side toward the sea. The backs of these houses came close to the upper margin of the beach, and there was a stone wall to keep the waves that rolled in at the top of the beach when the tide is high, from undermining them.

You can see these houses and the wall between them, and the sea, in the engraving, though the tide is represented as being low now, and the sands and rocks are bare. The rocks in the foreground are fragments which once formed a portion of the cliffs, but were undermined and made to fall down at some former time before the sea wall was built.

Beyond the row of houses in the picture you see the opening of the chasm of the Chine, but the view here presented gives you no idea of the immense magnitude of the ravine, nor of the imposing grandeur which it assumes to the eye



HE SHORE AT SHANKLIN,



of a person within it. The range of cliffs, too, in the foreground, are really of twice the height of a tall church spire, and those in the distance are three or four times that height, and it would be impossible for any engraving to convey an idea of the sublime effect which these lofty elevations produce upon the mind of a person walking upon the beach at the foot of them, or looking down from them from above.

On the top of the hill in the background of the picture we see a portion of the Downs where the children took their walk the day before they came down through the Chine. The whole of the vast hill is formed of chalk, with layers of what are called *flint nodules* at different altitudes. The edges of these layers appear in the face of the cliff, as seen in the engraving.

The waves that roll in from the sea are gradually wearing away this hill, and spreading the chalk and the flint nodules all over the bottom of the English Channel. It wears it away by undermining it below, and then the frost and the rains break off and wash down portions from above, so as to keep the face of the rock always perpendicular.

The work goes on very slowly—very slowly indeed—not more than a foot or two, perhaps being carried away in a year. Thousands of

years have been consumed in wearing away the hill to its present condition, and the immense mass that is left is enough to last for thousands of years to come. But in the end, unless some change takes place to arrest the process, the whole will be worn away.

The flint nodules that lie thus in layers in the chalk are very curious things. They are rounded and irregular masses, of every odd shape you can imagine. They are composed of a very hard substance, and in former times they were used for making flints for guns, and for tinder boxes. But now such flints are very seldom used.

CHAPTER XVI.

MRS. CAMPBELL'S MANAGEMENT.

Mrs. Morelle and Florence sat down upon a seat placed for the accommodation of visitors, where there was a good view of the sea, and while they were resting there Grimkie and John rambled about over the sands picking up shells and pebbles. There were one or two sail-boats drawn up upon the beach, and at one place there were two small row-boats.

"Grimkie," said John, "let us go and take a sail."

"There is not any wind," said Grimkie.

"Then let us take one of these row-boats and go out and have a row."

"And leave auntie and Florence on the shore?" asked Grimkie.

"They might go with us," said John, "if they take a notion to."

"Do you think they would take such a notion?" asked Grimkie.

"Florence would," said John, "I am sure."

"And auntie?" said Grimkie.

"Well, about mother," replied John, "I don't know. She does not like little boats very well. We might ask her."

I would recommend to all mothers who may read this book, and to all elder brothers and sisters who may ever have the charge of younger ones, to adopt Mrs. Morelle's principle and practice in respect to requests made to them, and that is never to give but one answer to such requests; and in order that they may do this, or, in other words, in order that the first answer given may be the right one, and one that can be adhered to, proper time must be taken—more or less according to the nature and importance of the request—to consider what the answer ought to be.

The reverse of this mode of management was well illustrated on this very spot the day before, when a lady from Scotland, with her two boys, who had come to the Isle of Wight on a visit, had come down through the Chine, and then had sat down to rest themselves on the same seat where Mrs. Morelle and Florence were now sitting. The lady's name was Mrs. Campbell, and after they had been seated there a few minutes, the two boys, whose names were Arthur and Donald, went down to the beach, and there they found the boat, and also the boatmen, just

as Grimkie and John had done. They asked the boatman about his boat, and he told them the price of it for an hour was one shilling. The boys immediately came back to their mother, and begged her to go out with them in it on the water.

"Oh no, boys," said Mrs. Campbell. "You don't want to go out on the water. It is a great deal pleasanter here on the land."

"Ah yes, mother," said Donald. "We want to go very much. It is a very nice boat."

"But I don't like to go out in small boats," said Mrs. Campbell. "Besides, it is dangerous. Such little boats tip over very easily, and then we should all be drowned."

"No, mother," replied Donald, "this is a very steady boat, and with only three of us in, it would not be heavily loaded at all."

"Besides," said Arthur, "if we should tip over it would only wet us a little. The water is so shallow that it would not be over our heads any where within half a mile of the shore. And we need not go out more than a quarter of a mile."

"But then even if we were not drowned," said Mrs. Campbell, "what a very disagreeable thing it would be to fall into the water and get wet all over, besides being half frightened to death. No.

I can't let you go out in the boat. But I'll tell you what I will do instead. To-morrow or next day I will get a carriage and take you to ride,

"No, mother," said Authur, beginning now to speak in a whimpering tone, such as children often fall into when they are attempting to overcome their mother's objections to any of their plans by dint of importunity,—" we want to go out in the boat. We want to see how the shore looks, and the cliffs seen from the water."

"But they don't look any differently from what they do here," replied Mrs. Campbell. "Indeed, they will be farther off there and won't look so high.

The boys now began to pout and look sullen, and to mutter that they though their mother might let them go just as well as not—there was no danger at all—and then she never would let them do any thing that they really wanted to do—and other such things, all which made Mrs. Campbell feel very uncomfortable. To produce this effect was, in fact, exactly what the boys wanted, and they knew from past experience that by persevering they should gain their end.

"Come, boys," said their mother, after a mcment's pause. "Run around on the beach and pick up pebbles and shells,—or else we will go back home. Be good boys and see how well you can bear disappointment. Besides I will give you a ride some day, and you will like that a great deal better than sailing in a boat."

"No," said Arthur, sullenly, "we want to go in the boat."

"But I tell you positively," replied Mrs. Campbell, "that I can't let you go in the boat, and it is of no use asking me any more. That is my final answer, and I don't want to hear any more about it. It is very dangerous. We might even be blown out to sea."

When a mother gives a reason for a command or refusal, it usually operates not to convince the child, but only to invite him to reply. Especially when the reasons—as they usually are in such cases—are false ones.

"Mother," said Donald, in reply to his mother's argument from the danger of being driven out to sea, "there is not the least breath of wind."

"I know," said his mother, looking a little confused. "There is not much wind now, but a breeze might spring up suddenly. Besides we might be carried off by the tide."

"The tide is coming in," said Authur. "The poatman told me so. So the tide could not carry us out. If we were out there already it would bring us back."

134 Mrs. Campbell's Management.

The truth was Mrs. Campbell was not assigning the real reasons at all which led her to refuse the request of the children, but was giving false reasons in the vain hope of persuading them that it was not best to go. Her real reason was her own timidity about going in boats, and the consequent discomfort which she would suffer in going out in one. This was a good reason, and she should sim; ly have said when the boys came with their request, that she could not allow them to go. They would not have been satisfied with this, it is true, but if their mother had always acted in this way, and had always adhered to her first decision, unless in cases where a change of circumstances, or new facts coming to her knowledge, led her to modify it,—they would have acquiesced, and they would at all events have been less intensely dissatisfied than they were with having pretended reasons offered them, which they could themselves perceive were false, and were only adduced for the purpose of eking out their mother's feeble and inefficient authoritv.

The affair ended as such affairs with such mothers generally do. The boys persisted in their importunity, and finally Mrs. Campbell said in a sort of pet that if they would not give her any peace in any other way, she supposed

she should have to go. So she rose from her seat and followed the boys down to the boat, complaining all the time of their unreasonableness in spoiling all the pleasure of her walk, by forcing her to go on board a boat which was of all things what she most detested. The next time she came to the Isle of Wight, she said, or went on any other excursion of pleasure, she should leave them at home.

The boatman brought up the boat to the end of the little pier, the boys half pleased at having carried their point, but yet unsatisfied and disquieted in spirit, and very far from being happy, and their mother still more out of humor than they.

Thus by Mrs. Campbell's mode of management, she failed of accomplishing either end. She neither gratified the children by such a compliance with their wishes as should give them a pleasant excursion on the water, nor did she secure her own ease and comfort in escaping such an excursion herself. She might by proper management have secured either one of these objects,—whichever on the whole she preferred. But she managed the affair in such a way as to 'ose both of them.

CHAPTER XVII

MRS. MORELLE'S MANAGEMENT.

When John came to his mother to propose to her his plan of going out upon the water in a row boat, her first feeling was the same with that of Mrs. Campbell, namely, a strong aversion to the excursion on her own account. Her mode of management, however, in such cases, as I believe has already been intimated in the course of these volumes, was very different from that of Mrs. Campbell. She heard the proposal,—made some inquiries in respect to the boat, and the state of the tide, and then said.

"Well, John, I will consider the subject. Go back to Grimkie again and come here in about five minutes, and I will give you my decision."

John knew very well from past experience, that this decision, when he came back to receive it, whatever it might be, would be final.

"Or rather, stop a moment, John," said Mrs. Morelle, just as John was going away. "It won't be necessary for you to come back. I will make a signal. You may look toward me in

about five minutes, and if I conclude to go in the boat, I will hold my handkerchief up in the air, but if I conclude not to go, I will let it fall into my lap."

So John went away and Mrs. Morelle began to consider the question of the proposed row upon the water. Her thoughts on the subject expressed in words, were somewhat as follows:

"It will gratify the children very much to go out in the boat, and it will be uncomfortable for me. But the gratification and pleasure to them will be much greater than any discomfort or pain that I shall experience. There can not be any real danger. The water is not deep, there is no wind, and the tide is coming in. The boat, too, must be a safe one, and the boatman a careful man, for the authorities are always very strict in regulating such things safely in all public places in England. Still I shall be afraid—though my fears will be groundless,—the effect of imagination, or of the association of ideas, without any real cause. I can not help feeling such fears, it is true, but I can have the good sense to understand the nature of them, and to refuse to allow myself to be governed by them when they stand in the way of any substantial good, such as the happiness of my children. And if I conclude to disregard my fears in this case, and go, then I

must conceal them, for it will half spoil the pleasure of the excursion to the children to suppose I go unwillingly and with pain."

By the time that Mrs. Morelle had gone through with this train of thought in her mind about two minutes had expired, but looking up she saw John standing near the little pier, and looking toward her, awaiting the signal. She did not accordingly delay any longer but held her handkerchief high in the air.

"Yes, Grimkie," said John, calling out eagerly to Grimkie. "Yes. That means yes. We are going. Yes, boatman, we are going. Get your boat ready."

In a few minutes Mrs Morelle and Florence came down to the pier, and when all was ready they got into the boat. Mrs. Morelle concealed her fears and took her place upon a nice cushioned seat near the stern. She was a little alarmed at the oscillations which were imparted to the boat by John's getting in. As for Grimkie he stepped in very carefully, or rather very skilfully, so as not to put the boat in motion at all; but John rather liked the tilting of it, and so he took no pains to keep it steady,—not thinking that his mother might be afraid.

The way to get into a boat without tilting it, when there is a lady on board whom you do not

wish to alarm, is to step over as far as you can, so as to plant your foot, when you set it down, as near as possible into the *middle* of the boat. Then the pressure of your weight is equally distributed, as they say, over the bottom of the boat, and the whole body of it is pressed down equally, and there is very little tilting to either side. But if you step upon the side of the boat, or upon the bottom of it near one side, no matter how carefully you do it, the weight of your body will press down that side deep into the water, and make the lady afraid.

Grimkie understood this, and so by putting his foot over as near as possible into the centre of the boat, and resting his weight upon it there, he succeeded in getting in without scarcely disturbing the equilibrium at all; while John, though much lighter, by stepping upon the edge of the boat on one side, and then giving a little jump tilted it so much as to startle his mother and Florence considerably. In fact Florence gave quite a little scream.

As soon, however, as all were settled in their places, and the boat began to move away from the pier, the fears of the ladies at once subsided, and the whole party enjoyed the excursion very much. The water was shallow, and the surface of it was so smooth and glassy that the bottom

with all the little pebbles and shells, and the ripples in the surface of the sand, could be seen almost as distinctly as if the boat had been floating in the air.

For some time the children occupied themselves in looking over the gunwale of the boat into the water, watching the various objects which they saw lying on the bottom, or which came floating by. There were some beautiful masses of sea-weed, of delicate forms and beautiful colors, that Florence said she wished she could get, to press and preserve, but they were too deep in the water. There were also several crabs, and in one place a sun-fish, which last consisted of a mass of jelly in the form of a cup which made its way through the water by a series of alternate contractions and dilatations, very curious to behold.

The crabs and the sun-fish John wished very much that he could get, to preserve in some way and carry to America to put into his museum.

The attention of the party in the boat was so absorbed for a time in watching these wonders which revealed themselves in the water, that they did not look up toward the land until they had proceeded for some distance from the pier. Then suddenly Mrs. Morelle happening to lift up her eyes obtained a view of the shore, and sho

immediately uttered an exclamation of delight, which at once caused all the children to look up.

The view was beautiful. The range of cliffs extended uninterruptedly for miles along the shore. Above them to the left were the Downs, with here and there parties of visitors walking upon them, and appearing like moving dots. In the centre of the view was the opening of the great chasm of the Chine, with the row of houses extending along the beach below to the right, and beyond it, on the top of the cliffs, the roofs of the houses of the village, and the spire of the church, appeared among the trees. Farther still toward the right the coast line was seen extending from headland to headland toward the north and east, until it was lost in the distance, in dimness and haze.

Mrs. Morelle was so much interested in the view, and in the other objects of attention that occupied her mind, that she forgot her fears entirely, and enjoyed the excursion very much.

Such a result as this almost always follows, when we compel ourselves to obey the voice of reason, and refuse to listen to imaginary and foolish fears. As long as we cherish and indulge the phantasms and notions which spring up in our minds, and which reason condemns, so long they will domineer over us and make us misera-

ble. But if we resolutely refuse to pay attention to them, and show a firm determination to be governed not by them, but by truth and reason, then the phantoms soon fade away and disappear.

After cruising about upon the water for nearly an hour the boatman turned the boat toward the shore, and the party landed upon the pier.

"Here we are, mother," said John, "all safe upon the shore again. And are you not glad you went?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "I am very glad, indeed. And I am much obliged to you and Grimkie for contriving such a pleasant excursion for us."

CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. PELHAM.

The party did not return through the Chine, but in order to vary the walk they went up by the public carriage road, which ascended by a winding and zigzag way from the little street leading along the beach by the row of houses up the cliffs, in a sort of dell or series of dells, which like the chines were undoubtedly formed by a washing away of portions of the ground by currents of water. The water, however, which formed these dells was probably that of the rain, while the Chine had been hollowed out by means of a permanent stream, which came down from the interior of the country. This was, perhaps, the reason why the chasm of the Chine was so much more steep and precipitous.

The winding road up the dells was very pretty, being shaded by trees, and it turned continually as it ascended, so as to present many charming points of view. At one of these turns there was a pretty little inn, where visitors might stop to rest themselves and procure refreshments if they

desired. At other places booths or little shops were established at the wayside, and in these a great number of Isle of Wight curiosities were kept for sale. These curiosities consisted chiefly of minerals of various kinds, some of which were crystals of beautiful forms and resplendent colors, and of sets of engravings among which were a great many different views of the Chine. There were also many different kinds of toys and playthings for children. Many of these were particularly intended for playing in the sand on the beach—little shovels, spades, wheelbarrows, carts, and the like.

Our party, of course, cared nothing for the playthings, but they were quite interested in looking a the curiosities and souvenirs, and they bought several specimens, choosing always such as were small in size, or at least snug and compact in form, so as to be easily packed and transported.

After making their purchases the party went on, and when at length they came to the inn, John proposed very eagerly that they should go in and have something to eat.

It was time for luncheon, he said. Besides, he was hungry—very hungry.

Mrs. Morelle suggested that, perhaps, they would get a better luncheon at the hotel, but

John thought that at such a pretty looking inn they must have very nice things. And at any rate it would be in a new place, and next to having a very nice luncheon the best thing was to have it in a new place.

So they all went in. The landlady ushered them to a pretty little parlor, where there was a table in the middle of the room, and a sofa in the corner. There were a number of pictures hanging upon the walls, and there was a pretty green yard, with a swing in it under the trees, to be seen from the window.

On Mrs. Morelle's asking the landlady what they could have for luncheon, she replied, to John's great delight, that she had some very nice gooseberry tarts just from the oven. One of the tarts was accordingly ordered at once, with some milk, and also some bread and cheese.

The landlady went out, and presently a young girl came in, and began to set the table very nicely. When the cloth was spread, and the plates and knives and forks were laid, she brought in the pie, and also the milk, which proved to be so rich and sweet that Grimkie said it was fully equal to New York cream.

With the pie the landlady brought a bowl of powdered white sugar, in order, as she said, that if the tart was not sweet enough, they could put in more sugar. This arrangement suited the ideas of the children admirably well.

After the luncheon Florence asked her mother whether they might not go out into the yard to swing a little while before they went home.

"Certainly," said Mrs. Morelle.

"How long may we stay?" asked Florence.

"As long as you please," said Mrs. Morelle.

"But, mother," said Florence, "you will have nothing to do in the meantime."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle, "I have got a book to read."

So saying Mrs. Morelle drew a book from her pocket. It was her custom, in fact, always to have something to read on such occasions. Whenever she went out on an excursion of this kind with the children, she took good care to provide herself with a book, taking one always of small size and with thin covers, so as to make it easy to carry, and then whenever an occasion occurred for her to wait in any place, while the children were rambling about, or amusing themselves in any occupation in which she herself did not wish to join, she always had something to occupy her mind, and make her contented to wait as long as the children might desire.

Mrs. Morelle accordingly established herself in a reclining position upon the sofa with her back

toward the light, and began to read, while the children went out to the swing. But whether it was that the children were very still in their swinging, or that the book was not interesting, or that Mrs. Morelle had become tired from her walk down the Chine, or from whatever other cause it might have been, in the course of ten minutes she was fast asleep.

The children played out by the swing for some time, expecting every moment to hear Mrs. Morelle call them, to tell them that it was time to go home. But at length, finding that she did not call them, they came in, and the noise of their coming awakened her. Grimkie then rang the bell for the landlady, and paid the bill, and then all went out, up the hill, till they reached the village and so went to the hotel.

After this the party remained in Shanklin many days. They stayed there, in fact, about a fortnight in all, and during that time Mrs. Morelle made the acquaintance of two or three of the lady visitors at the place, and enjoyed their society very much. Among these ladies the one that she became most acquainted with was Mrs. Pelham, the wife of a London barrister, who came to spend a few days at Shanklin with her two children, Egbert and Ellen. When Mrs. Morelle first saw Mrs. Pelham she thought she

was very haughty and reserved in her manners, as indeed she was, and as almost all ladies in England, except a few of very high rank, are quite apt to be.

Indeed, John himself had reason to form this opinion of Mrs. Pelham from the circumstances of his first acquaintance with her. She was sitting upon a seat on the grounds, occupied with some sort of fancy needle work, and with her daughter Ellen seated by her side reading a book. Egbert, who was considerably younger than John, had found an ant's nest by the side of the path, and was stooping down over it watching the ants as they were bringing up grains of sand from their hole and piling them up in a little mound all around the outside of it.

He had a little dog named Jocko that was running about near him. He, however, was not paying any attention to the dog, but was wholly absorbed in watching the ants, and while he was so engaged, John, who was walking along with Grimkie at a little distance, ran forward to see what he was looking at.

"It is an ant hole," said John. "Every one of those little fellows has got a pair of pinchers just outside of his mouth strong enough for them to lift up a rock bigger than his head."

"A rock?" said Egbert.

"Yes," said John, "a grain of sand is a big rock to them."

"Egbert," said Mrs. Pelham, speaking in a very bland, but in a very ceremonious manner, "come to me."

So Egbert went to his mother. She lifted him up and placed him upon the seat by her side. He understood at once what this meant. His mother, he knew very well, for some mysterious reason that he could not comprehend, did not like to have him form any acquaintance with "strange boys," as she called them, and whenever she found him commencing such an acquaintance she always called him to her, and kept him by her until the strange boy went away.

John followed Egbert with his eyes as he went to his mother, wondering what she wanted of him, and when he saw her simply put him upon the seat by her side and coolly resume her work, he looked greatly astonished. In a moment, however, seeing Jocko standing near, he called to him, and began to pat him on his head, and to ask him what his name was.

"Jocko," said Mrs. Pelham, "come here."

Jocko ran immediately to his mistress, and
pinting under the seat, said quietly:
Lie down."

The dog crept reluctantly under the seat and lay down, though he kept his eyes all the time fixed wistfully upon John, as if he would have been very willing, if it had depended upon him, to come and play with him and tell him his name.

John, on witnessing this movement, looked more astonished than ever; and Grimkie happening to come just then he turned to him and said:

"Grimkie, these English people are so proud they won't let us speak even to their dogs."

Now, although John said this quite in an undertone, still it happened that Mrs. Pelham heard him. But instead of tending, as might have been supposed, to make her angry with him, and more determined than before not to have any thing to do with him, it had quite the contrary effect. It made her almost willing that her children should become acquainted with him There were two reasons why it had this tendency. One was, the words seemed to imply that John was not English himself, and the other was that his speaking in that manner denoted an ease and confidence, which according to English notions betoken gentility.

1 must say a word on each of these points. In the first place, as to his not being English.

it is often observed by Americans travelling in Europe that English ladies are much more reserved and cautious in respect to forming new acquaintances among their own countrywomen than among foreigners. An English lady is often seen to be very cold and distant toward strangers whom she meets in any public place, until she finds that they are French, or German, or American, and then the frigid ceremoniousness of her demeanor immediately melts away. The explanation of the phenomena is this. She imagines that if they are English it might be that they are much beneath her in rank or social position, and that if she makes acquaintance with such a person in one place, she may be obliged to recognize her in another, and so involve herself in awkward embarrassments-for English ladies of fashion injure themselves quite seriously, in the estimation of their equals, by merely knowing those inferior to them in the social scale.

Thus Mrs. Pelham did not know,—while she supposed that John was English—but that his mother was the wife of a merchant, and the wives of barristers and of other professional men, as indeed do all the upper classes of English society, look down with great disdain upon the whole mercantile class, whom they designate

as "trades-people." It seems to us very strange that this should be so, when we consider that the basis of all the greatness and power of England rests mainly upon the commerce and manufactures, which are carried on altogether by the very classes of men whom they look down upon in social life with so much disdain.

It is true that a merchant or manufacturer who has acquired great wealth, and lives in expensive style, is sometimes admitted to a certain position in fashionable society,—but it is a very doubtful and precarious position. He is always considered as so admitted by grace and favor, and not as of right.

This state of things makes English ladies extremely cautious about making new acquaint-ances in public places, so long as they suppose that the strangers are English. But when they discover that they are foreigners, a great portion of their caution disappears. If they are foreigners, they are probably only going to remain a short time in England, and thus it is very unlikely that an acquaintance, if formed, would lead to any embarrassing results in time to come.

Besides, the very fact that they are not English, implies that they have made a long and expensive journey or voyage to visit England, and

the very fact that they have come so far, and that they are travelling about to visit public places of interest, denotes that they are persons of some consequence in their own country, and not "common people," whom it would be inconvenient and disagreeable for an English lady to know.

After these explanations it will not appear strange that the remark made by John that English ladies were so proud that they would not let other people speak even to their dogs, should have diminished and not increased her aversion to have her children become acquainted with him.

Grinkie stopped with John to look at the ant's nest, and while there Mrs. Pelham, after observing them a moment, said to Egbert, speaking, however, in a low tone so as not to be overheard,

"Who is that boy, Egbert?"

"I don't know, mother," said Egbert.

"He speaks remarkably good English," said Mrs. Pelham.

"Yes, mother, he can talk as well as I can. I talked with him yesterday."

"Yesterday," said his mother. "Why, Egbert, I have charged you very often never to

make acquaintance with strange children without

my leave."

"I did not make acquaintance with him, mother. I only talked with him a little while," said Egbert.

"What did he say to you?" asked Mrs. Pel-

ham.

"He told me that he came from Paris, and that he had been to Jernsey."

"Jersey—or Guernsey you mean," said Mrs Pelham. "There is no such place as Jernsey."

"It was some such place as that," said Egbert

"I don't think he can be French," said Mrs. Pelham, looking toward John and speaking half to herself and half to Egbert. "He may have had an English nurse. He has not the least accent."

"He is an American boy, mother," said Egbert.

"American?" repeated his mother. "Ah! that explains it. I have seen his mother here on the grounds and could not imagine who she could be. Nobody seemed to know her, and yet she seemed to be a very nice person."

"I asked him if his mother was good to him," said Egbert, "and he told me she was very good

indeed."

After a moment's pause Mrs. Pelham added,

"Egbert, you may go now and play."

"But, mother," said Egbert, "that boy has not gone."

"No matter," said Mrs. Pelham.

So Egbert jumped down and went back toward the ant's nest. As he came to the place, however, John turned with Grimkie to go away. Whether it was that he had watched the ants as long as he wished, or whether he felt a little resentment at Egbert's mother for having called him away from him, and now resolved that it was his turn to repel advances toward an acquaintance, I can not say. At any rate, he turned with Grimkie and went away.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE UNDERCLIFF.

AFTER the occurrence related in the last chapter Mrs. Pelham's manner toward Mrs. Morelle was greatly changed when she met her upon the grounds, or in the passages of the house. Instead of passing by with that look of cold and stolid indifference, usually assumed by English ladies in such a case, when they pass persons whom they wish to look down upon, and which seems to say that they are wholly unconscious even of their presence, she at once began, as the phrase is, to take notice of her. It was first only an amiable look, then a smile of recognition, and at last, on a favorable opportunity occurring the ladies interchanged a good morning, and the acquaintance was established.

It might, perhaps, have been supposed that Mrs. Morelle would have so far resented the haughtiness and disdain with which Mrs. Pelham regarded her at first, at to refuse to acknowledge her civilities when she changed her air and bearing. But Mrs. Morelle was entirely

above any petty jealousies and resentments of this kind, and always took people as she found them. Besides, in travelling about the world and visiting different countries, we find so many different customs and habits of demeanor, many of which appear to us at first extremely repulsive, that were we to take offence at every thing that displeases us, and turn away in a pet, we should make very little progress in initiating ourselves into the usages of foreign life, and should lose one of the chief advantages of foreign travel, which is that of enlarging and liberalizing our views in respect to the phases of human character, and forming within ourselves a tolerant spirit in regard to the faults and foibles with which the world is filled

Mrs. Morelle did not, therefore, allow herself to feel any resentment at the coldness and haughtiness with which she was sometimes treated by strangers, but considered all these and similar inconveniencies as things to be expected in leaving one's native land and going out into the world, to be brought there into contact with the national peculiarities of different people. She was ready, accordingly, at all times, to treat Mrs. Pelham with politeness according to her idea of what was due among strangers in their casual intercourse with one another. The result

was that in the course of a few days she and Mrs Pelham formed quite an intimate acquaintance with each other, and they often sat together upon one of the seats on the lawn, talking about life in London, in Paris, or in New York, while the children, followed by Jocko, were rambling about the grounds.

One day Mrs. Pelham asked Mrs. Morelle if she had been at the Undercliff.

"No," said Mrs. Morelle, "I have never heard of the Undercliff. What is it?"

"It is the most charming part of the island," said Mrs. Pelham.

By looking at the map the reader will observe that the Isle of Wight terminates towards the south in a sort of blunt point, with a range of downs extending along a coast on the landward side. These downs are very high, and they lie very near the sea, but instead of presenting toward it a range of perpendicular cliffs, with only a narrow beach below, as is generally the case where the mountainous chalk formations lie contiguous to the sea, the shore is formed by a confused mass of shelving terraces, vast chasms and precipices, and steep green slopes, and deep wooded ravines and dells, with the range of chalk mountains beyond rising above and towering over them—prese ting a picture of the wildest

and most romantic scenery imaginable, about half a mile wide and six miles long. This region is called the Undercliff

There are two circumstances to be considered besides the picturesque character of the scenery, to account for the attractiveness of the IIndercliff to the English people. One is that it is the most southern point of England, and also that it slopes steeply toward the south, so that the sun lies warmly upon it during the winter, and makes the climate more mild and genial than that of any other place in England. Delicate exotics, such as geraniums, fuschias, and myrtles grow in the open air, and bloom about the cottages and in all the yards and gardens, in the utmost profusion.

The other is that the strata of which the land was originally formed were strata of chalk, clay and loam, substances which when mixed together form a very fertile soil. The consequence is that the whole region, though broken and precipitous in the extreme, has all its hard features softened and subdued by being enveloped every where with a most profuse and luxuriant vegetation, consisting of groves of trees, and clusters of climbing vines, and grass and flowers, and ferns and mosses, growing every where with such richness and verdure as to make the whole scene

quite a little paradise. At every place where the sea forms a smooth beach, a small town has grown up, and every where from the line of the coast to the foot of the steep ascent of the downs every terrace, and valley, and nook has a villa or a cottage, or a pretty rural church, or a house and garden, around and among which the road, smooth and hard as a floor, winds charmingly, now ascending, now descending, now turning sharply round at the foot of a vine-clad cliff, now passing a gateway leading through gardens to an elegant hotel, and now coming suddenly out upon some elevated plateau, or pinnacle, commanding a wide and magnificent view of the sea.

It is supposed that the Undercliff was formed by the undermining and softening of the lower strata of the mountain, and the falling in of all that was above, in a confused mass of rocky ruins, which afterward became in some measure subdued and softened in their outlines by the weather and the rains, and were then gradually enveloped in a covering of vegetation.

Indeed, the region is not yet in a stable condition—subordinate slips and land-slides being

continually taking place.

Within the last century an immense tract of eighty or ninety acres caved down in this way.

and the whole mass lies now in ruins extending for a considerable distance along the coast. The crushed and broken strata lie in confused heaps and ridges along the shore, presenting every where to view broken rocks, precipitous and overhanging cliffs, and frightful chasms. The whole tract is now covered by a luxuriant growth of bushes, grass, climbing vines, ivy and wild flowers; and in some places young forests are beginning to appear. Through this wild scene a pathway has been made along the shore, but the main road avoids it, and passes above, higher up the declivity of the mountain.

This pathway is called the Romantic Path. It begins not far from Shanklin and passes along pretty near the shore toward Ventnor, which is the next principal place of interest visited by travellers.

Grimkie, who had learned all this from the map and the guide-book, explained it in full to Florence one day, seated in an arbor on the grounds of the Shanklin hotel, and he showed her the situation of Ventnor, and pointed out the line of the road from Shanklin to Ventnor, back a little way from the sea, and also the Romantic Path following more closely the line of the shore.

"I'll tell you what we will do, Florence," said

John eagerly. "We will get a carriage for you and mother, to go by the road, and Grimkie and I will go along by the Romantic Path."

"But I should like to go by the Romantic

Path too," said Florence.

"Yes, but then mother would have to go alone in the carriage," said John, "and that would not do."

"I will go in the carriage," said Grimkie, speaking to Florence, "if you choose, and you and John can go by the path."

John looked very grave at this proposal, and

shook his head, saying,

"I am afraid mother would not trust us. I am sure she would not trust us."

The truth was he was afraid himself to go by such a way without Grimkie.

"How far is it from here to Ventnor?" asked Florence.

"I will measure it on the map," said Grimkie.

So saying he took a little card of paper from his wallet, and laid it down upon the map, in such a manner that the corner of the card was at Shanklin and the edge of it in the direction of Ventnor. Then he marked with his pencithe place of Ventnor on the edge of the card, and thus transferred to the card the distance from one of these places to the other, on the

map. He then applied the card to the scale of miles in one corner of the map, and found the distance to be between three miles and a half and four miles.

"It must be about five miles," said Grimkie, following the windings of the road. "You see by this mode of measuring we get the distance by a bee line."

"A bee line?" repeated John.

"Yes," said Grimkie, "a straight line through the air, as a bee flies."

"I think it would be prettier to say a bird line," said John. "A bird can fly as straight as a bee, and I don't like bees; they sting."

Florence, who seemed to be musing thoughtfully while Grimkie had been measuring, now said,

"I don't think we can divide our party in any way in going to Ventnor without making mother anxious. If any of us were to go by the Romantic Path she would feel a little uneasy. Not very uneasy, but a little uneasy—just enough to spoil the pleasure of her ride. So we had better all go in a carriage together, and then we can form a party at Ventnor and come back over the Romantic Path from there."

John did not quite like this plan. It seemed to him that there was something more grand and

imposing in making an advance on foot of five miles over entirely new ground, as a part of the journey, than in making the journey in a carriage and then coming back over the five miles for a mere walk. So he began to make objections, and to beg that the other plan might be adopted.

"Ah no, Florence," said he, in reply to the argument Florence had offered. "It will be a great deal better for us to go by the Romantic Path now. There is no need of all of us going in the carriage. Some of us might go the other way just as well as not, and that would be a

great deal better."

"Better for whom?" asked Florence.

"It would be better for me, I am sure," said John.

"That is just it," said Florence. "The reason why you and I don't agree is that you are planning for yourself, while I am planning for mother."

"Then let us go and ask mother," said John.
"I am sure she will not have the least objection"

"No," said Florence. "I don't think it is best even to ask her. I don't think she would have any great objection to some of us going by the Romantic Path, but I am very sure that she

will enjoy the ride better herself if we are all in the carriage with her."

"There would not be any harm in asking her, at any rate," said John.

"Yes," said Florence. "I think it would do a little harm, for it would put her under the necessity of refusing us something we wanted, and that she never likes to do, and never will do if she can help it. If we ask her she must either say yes, and then feel more or less uneasy about us for fear that we might lose our way, or say no, and so feel uncomfortable from having denied us a request and compelled us to go with her, when we wished to be somewhere else."

"Then are we never to ask mother any thing at all?" asked John.

"Yes," said Florence, "when we don't know beforehand what her wish would be. When we do know we ought not to ask her, and so put her to the unnecessary pain of giving us a denial."

John looked somewhat dissatisfied and sullen at this, but Grimkie soon dispelled the gloom from his brow by proposing that they should go to the stables and see what sort of a carriage and horses they could get to take them to Ventnor.

"I am determined to find one," said John,

"that has got room for me on the front seat by the side of the coachman."

"We will see," said Grimkie. So they went off toward the stables.

In concluding this chapter I will remark that one reason for the difference between Florence and John, in respect to planning for their mother, was the difference in their ages. Children, it is true, have a certain love for their mother, when they are young, but it is a very different love from that which their mother feels for them. Their love may be called a getting love. They want to get all they can, and give nothing. The mother's love, on the other hand, is a giving love. She wishes to give all the happiness she can to the children without seeking any return. As children grow older they change, and begin to feel a desire to give as well as to get; and this was beginning to be the case with Florence.

CHAPTER XX.

VENTNOR.

'THE idea which John had formed of choosing a carriage on which there would be room for him on the coachman's seat, was destined to disappointment, for the carriage which they finally selected was one which had no coachman's seat at all. The horses were driven by a postillion.

When Grimkie and John saw this carriage in the stable yard they were both at first quite pleased with the appearance of it, it looked so spacious and comfortable. But on a second look at it John was very much surprised to find that there was no seat for a coachman or driver.

- "It is a very nice carriage for us," said Grim-kie.
- "Yes," said John, "but where is the seat for the driver?"
- "The horses are driven by a postillion," said the stable keeper.
 - "A postillion?" repeated John.
- "Yes," said the stable keeper. "He rides on one of the horses."

John had often seen this mode of riding before, especially in Paris. There whenever the emperor or empress goes out to ride they have four horses to the carriage, and there is a gaily-dressed postillion on the nigh horse of each pair. This is more genteel, and, in some respects, more convenient than the ordinary mode, inasmuch as the driver is farther removed in this way from the people in the carriage.

Travelling post-chaises in Europe are almost always driven in this way. And even sometimes when John had been travelling in a diligence in France, or in Switzerland, and the party came to a long hill, so as to require an extra team of horses, he had observed that the team that was thus attached was usually driven in this way, by a postillion mounted on the nigh horse.

In Italy, however, when an additional force is required to go up a long ascent, they generally put on a yoke of oxen, which always seems very queer to American travellers. And what is queerer still, these oxen are usually driven by a man who sits on the yoke between their necks, and with his face toward the carriage. Thus he has the backs and sides of the oxen right before him, and can whip them at his ease.

At first John was somewhat perplexed to decide between the excitement and glory of being

driven into Ventnor by a postillion, and the pleasure of riding himself on the coachman's box. Grimkie, however, did not pay much attention to his doubts, but went on making his inquiries of the stable master, and after looking at several other carriages he finally decided on recommending to Florence to take this one.

So he went to her and made his report, and very soon came back again and engaged the carriage.

The party set off that very afternoon. They found, as they had expected from the accounts they had received of the Undercliff, that the scenery on the way was extremely picturesque and grand. The road ascended sometimes to a great elevation, from which on one side they could look up and see a smooth green mountain side rising far above them almost to the clouds, and on the other could look down far below over a vast expanse of sea, with sail-boats and rowboats without number near the shore, and here and there a great ship with a cloud of canvas spread, or a steamer with a long line of smoke issuing from her chimney, in the offing, headed up or down the channel.

The ride was a great deal too short, and about the middle of the afternoon, after passing by a great number of charming cottages nestled in nooks and corners under lofty cliffs, or embosomed in romantic dells-and many large and important villas, with great park gates, and pretty lodges at the entrances—and beautiful hotels, adorned with vine-clad piazzas, and porticos situated in the midst of romantic grounds and blooming gardens-they came at length to the entrance of the main street of Ventnor. It was a long and winding street, which followed the line of a shelving terrace high up above the the sea, and at the foot of the steep declivity of the downs. They went through the whole length of this street, gazing intently at the inns. and shops, and churches, and cottages, and rows of pretty lodging-houses that they passed on the way, and then turning up a winding road, between two verdant hedges, the postillion gallopped his horses up to the Royal Hotel.

This was the hotel which had been recommended to them at Shanklin, and so they drove directly to it. In the engraving you see how it appeared to them when they first arrived. The town of Ventnor itself, though near, is not in view. It is down below under the hill.

As soon as they had descended from the carriage and had engaged their rooms, Grimkie paid the postillion the price agreed upon for the horses and carriage, and also what was due to



VENTNOR.



the postillion himself. For these things are al ways distinct and separate in Europe.

While Florence was with her mother in her room, and was not yet ready to come out, she heard John knocking at the door. She knew his knock at once, and she called out to him:

"What do you want, Johnny? I can't come out just yet."

"Yes, come out, Florence," said John.
"Come out as quick as you can. I want to show you something out of the window."

"Can't I see it out of my window?" asked Florence.

"No," said John. "Your window does not look the right way. Come out here as quick as you can."

Florence came out pretty soon, and John, leading her to a window that opened from the hall, showed her a view of the downs,—the same view substantially that appears in the engraving,—where there was a sort of spur projecting from the mountain, with a path leading up the crest or ridge, and several people going up.

The path looked altogether too steep for it to be possible for any one to ascend it; but yet there were many people upon it, either going up or coming down. The distance was so great that they looked not much bigger than dots, and it was necessary to watch each different group for some time, in order to determine whether they were moving or not, and if they were which way they were going.

"Look at that path up the mountain," said John. "Won't that be a nice way for us to go up?"

"It is too steep," said Florence.

"No," said John. "It looks pretty steep, but it can't be really too steep. For don't you see how many people there are going up and down?"

"Yes," said Florence, "but then it looks very steep. Then, besides, how can we find our way to the place?"

"Oh, I can find the way well enough," said John. "We'll go this very afternoon, immediately after dinner."

Florence finally concluded to accede to this proposal, at least so far as to set out with John and go to the foot of the mountain, and then, she thought, after going up a little way she could determine whether it was too steep or not.

They dined that afternoon at four o'clock, which was about an hour after they arrived at the hotel. The children set out after dinner to take their walk. Mrs. Morelle preferred to stay

at the hotel. She knew that they would remain some days at least at Ventnor, and that she would have time without doubt to see all that was interesting in and around the place before they went on.

So the children set off by themselves. As John had anticipated, there was no difficulty in finding the way. There was a broad, and smooth, and very nicely kept road which led into the interior of the island from this end of Ventnor, and this road after ascending by many zigzags, passed very near the foot of the steep path which John had discovered, and then bearing away to the left it ascended to the downs, or rather, passed across the region occupied by them through an elevated valley.

The path, when they reached it, they found very steep, though not quite so steep as it looked when seen from the hotel. Still it was almost too precipitous to be ascended,—not so much through the difficulty of the climbing, as of the dizzying effect it produced upon the brain, on account of the perfectly smooth and unbroken surface of the slope, with not a stone, or a bush, or an inequality of any kind for the imagination to rest upon as a means of support in case of a fall.

Florence was at first rather afraid to go up,

but after ascending a little way she became more assured, and so she went on, until at length, on turning round, she was made quite dizzy at looking down the long slope, which was as smooth and steep as the roof of a house, and she sank down upon the ground completely terrified. Pretty soon, however, some boys, who were accustomed to the downs, came running down from above, with an air of such self-possession and unconcern that Florence began to be ashamed of her fears. Some of the boys were in the path and others on the smooth grass at the sides of it, and they seemed to run about and stop themselves in their descent whenever they pleased so easily that Florence began to think that after all there could not be much real danger.

So she went on, though with much fear and trembling, and scarcely daring to look behind her.

At length they all reached the summit, where they found, on looking back, a most magnificent view spread out before them.

"What a splendid view!" said Grimkie.

"Yes," said Florence. "It is. But I don't see how I am ever to get down again."

"Ah! we will go down another way," said John. "See, we can go down into the valley

there, and so get into the road without any difficulty."

The whole country was so smooth and bare that all the undulations of the surface could be seen for miles around, and the grass was so short and soft, that one could walk almost in any direction. So they chose a very easy mode of descent, and after gaining the road, they went on in it down among many windings and zigzags, until at length they arrived safely at the hotel.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BEACH AT VENTNOR.

During the first two or three days that Mrs. Morelle spent in Ventnor, she made one very pleasant excursion on the Downs, though she did not ascend by the steep path which had so much taken John's fancy, but went round by a more circuitous way, by which of course the ascent was more gentle. She also took three charming drives into the surrounding country, one each way along the shore, and another through the valley, which led into the interior across the Downs. She had walked, moreover, once or twice through the town, and called in at several of the principal shops, and so she began to think that she knew Ventnor and its environs very well.

She was, accordingly, quite surprised when on the third day John came running into her room in the hotel, in advance of Florence and Grimkie, who were following more slowly, to tell his mother of a grand discovery that they had made.

"We have found the most curious place,

mother, in all Ventnor. It is more curious even than the Downs."

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"The beach, mother," said John eagerly "The beach and bathing place. It is a very pretty place indeed. We want you to go down and see it this very afternoon."

It has already been said that the principal street of Ventnor was far up above the level of the sea, and though in passing through it a great many glimpses of the water could be seen between the houses, the immediate shore was nowhere in sight. It happened, however, that the children in rambling about had found their way down to what might be called the lower town.

There were two modes of access to "the Beach,"—as the place was usually called—one by a broad street, or rather road, which descended in a winding and zigzag way down the declivity through several little dells and valleys, and the other by a number of narrow passage-ways, which were formed by long flights of stone steps leading from one level to another among houses and gardens, until they came out close to the sea.

The children took Mrs. Morelle down one of these passages. The passage was so long, and the flights of steps seemed to lead down so far, that just as Florence in going up the path leading to the Downs was afraid she never could get down, so her mother in going down these stairways began to be afraid she never could get up.

Grimkie, however, told her it would not be necessary for her to mount all those steps again, but that there was a road by which she could come up which was of easy ascent, though the way was circuitous, and of course much longer.

When, at length, Mrs. Morelle reached the shore she was very much surprised at the spectacle which there presented itself to view. There was a pretty broad and very fine beach, extending for some distance along the shore. The beach was not straight but somewhat curved, being concave toward the sea, and was terminated at each end by a projecting rocky proontory. This gave the beach a very sheltered and snug appearance.

The beach was bordered on the land side by a low wall, with steps here and there leading down. Above the wall, and even with the top of it, was a street, which extended along the whole length of the beach, and parallel to it. On the opposite side of this little street was a row of neat and pretty houses, with front yards full of roses, and of other flowers such as only grow in hot houses in America, and gardens at

the sides of them and behind them. The houses were close to the foot of the steep slope down which the party had come by the zigzag passage way, and the gardens extended up this slope a little way on terraces built against the hill-side, with bowers and summer-houses here and there upon them at commanding points, and flights of stone steps leading from terrace to terrace to enable persons to ascend them.

"What a pretty place!" said Mrs. Morelle.
"I did not know that there was any such place as this in Ventnor."

"Nor did we till we found it out ourselves," said Grimkie.

But the most remarkable part of the spectacle which here presented itself to the eyes of the party was the scene of life and movement which it every where exhibited. The beach was covered with parties of visitors—among which were groups of little children working in the sand with wooden shovels, pails and wheelbarrows, and older children rambling about in search of pebbles and shells, others collecting sea-weed from the rocks at the extremities of the beach, and others sitting quietly on the different seats along the shore, talking together, or knitting, or reading, or sewing. There was a long line of bathing machines, some of which were out in

the water, with the bathers swimming about near them, and others the men in charge of them were pulling in, by means of a rope wound round a capstan fixed in the shore near the wall.

There were groups of men in strange looking caps and outlandish dresses of coarse grey stuff, such as Englishmen affect when in such places, examining the vessels in the offing, or talking with young ladies, who wore their hair in deep nets, and had their heads covered with big straw hats, with broad brims curved downward all around, to protect their necks and faces from the sun.

And yet after all, notwithstanding the mildness of the climate in Ventnor, and the fact that such tender plants will grow in the open air, there is not really sun enough to endanger the complexion of the young ladies to any great degree. The sky in England is almost always obscured by clouds and driving mists, even when it does not actually rain, and thus though the winters are very mild, so that the sheep even in Scotland get their living from pasturage almost all the year round, and the geranium and the fuschia and the passion-flower live in Ventnor in the open air, winter and summer, yet the sun is not powerful enough to ripen grapes, or Indian corn, any where.

And yet Indian corn and many kinds of grapes will ripen in the northern states of America where the thermometer sinks in winter so far below zero, that it is hard for the gardeners to keep their geraniums and passion-flowers alive even in their hot-houses and conservatories.

Mrs. Morelle was very much pleased with the beach, and with the lively scenes which presented themselves to view along the line of it, and in the street. The houses, too, on the other side of the street, looked very attractive. There were pretty yards in front of them, and piazzas and balconies opening upon the first and second stories, where people were sitting to enjoy the open air, and to observe what was going on upon the beach.

"Mother," said Florence, after they had walked about a few minutes, "what a beautiful place!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle. "It is a charming place indeed."

"I wish we had come here instead of going to the hotel," said Florence.

"Do you?" asked her mother. "It was you that decided the question what place we should come to."

"So I did, mother, but I did not know any thing about the beach. I only knew about the

village. If I had known about the beach I think I should have come here."

"It is very pleasant here certainly," said Mrs. Morelle.

"It would be so charming to have rooms in one of those houses, and sit on the balconies so near, and see every thing that is going on. You see we are a great deal nearer the beach than we were at Brighton."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle. "That is true."

"And then," continued Florence, "we could run out any time we pleased and sit upon the seats, or go out in one of the bathing machines to bathe."

"That would be very pleasant," said Mrs. Morelle.

"And so I wish we had come here," said Florence.

"It is not too late now, I suppose," rejoined Mrs. Morelle.

"Isn't it?" asked Florence eagerly. "Can we change?"

"I suppose we can," said Mrs. Morelle quietly.
"That is, if you choose to do so. I have nothing to do with the arrangements myself."

"Grimkie," said Florence, turning suddenly to Grimkie, "do you think we could change and come here?"

"Certainly," said Grimkie, "if we can find lodgings to let in any of these houses."

"Let us go and see, mother," said Florence.

"I have nothing to do about it," said Mrs. "But you may go and see, if you Morelle. choose"

"And what will you do in the meantime?" asked Florence.

"Oh, I will go and sit upon one of the seats, and watch the people while you are gone," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Would you go, Grimkie," said Florence, turning to Grimkie.

"Yes," said John eagerly, answering instead of Grimkie. "I would"

Grimkie said there could certainly be no objection to their going to look at the lodgings, if there were any.

"But, mother," said Florence, "we shall at

least want your advice."

"Well, I will give you my advice," said Mrs. Morelle," after you have ascertained the facts. If you find any rooms that you think will do, I will come, if you wish, and look at them."

CHAPTER XXII.

NEW LODGINGS.

It is true that the range of houses opposite the beach at Ventner consisted chiefly of lodging-houses, but at the time of the year when Mrs. Morelle and her party visited the Isle of Wight nearly all these houses were full. There were, however, a few vacant suites of rooms, namely, those made vacant by parties that had left the place that morning. The children as they walked along the street knew where these vacant rooms were by seeing a little pasteboard sign in the window, as follows:

APARTMENTS FURNISHED.

In Paris when there are apartments to let in this way, a similar placard is used, only it is, of course, in the French language, and it hangs outside the window, or near the great double door which usually forms the entrance to the French houses, instead of being placed, according to the English fashion, inside the window upon the sash. The French, too, convey the information whether the apartments they have to let are furnished or unfurnished, by the color of the paper. If the apartments are unfurnished, the paper is white. If they are furnished, it is yellow.

When people take rooms by the year, or for any longer time, they generally prefer to put in their own furniture; but for travellers and strangers, who wish to remain only for a short time, it is more convenient for them to find rooms that are all ready for them to take immediate possession.

So the children walked along the street, looking at all the windows in search of the well-known sign. The first house where they saw the sign Florence said she did not like. It was not so pretty a house as the rest, and the garden in front and around it was not so attractive. At the next house, which was one that Florence thought, from the appearance outside, would do very well, and which had the name of Mrs. Scott upon the door, a lady and gentleman and two children were standing at the door, when Florence and her party came to the gate, and just at that moment the door opened and a ser

vant girl let them in. After inviting them in, the girl, seeing Florence coming; left the door open, as if for her and her party to come in, and after being gone a moment with the strangers she came back to receive Florence. She was a very bright and pretty looking girl, and she received Florence with such a welcoming look as pretty nearly dispelled the feeling of fear which she had felt in first coming up to the door.

"We came to look at the rooms," said Florence. "You have some rooms to let."

"Yes," said the girl, "unless they are taken. There is a lady and gentleman looking at them now."

Florence felt quite abashed and confused at hearing this. She had had a good deal of experience in visiting rooms to let, and had encountered various questions and difficulties in so doing, but this was the first time that she had ever happened to arrive at a house at the same time with another applicant, and for a moment she felt utterly at a loss to know what to do.

She turned to Grimkie and said in an undertone,

"What shall we do?"

"We won't interfere with the gentleman who is now looking at the rooms," said Grimkie, speaking to the servant girl. "We will come

back by and by perhaps, and then if he should not have taken the rooms we will look at them."

This decision seemed entirely satisfactory to Florence, and so they all went back to the yard, and into the street again.

They walked along the street, looking for other signs of Apartments Furnished, and though they saw two or three in the windows of different houses, they saw no house which pleased them so much as Mrs. Scott's, and so they concluded to wait until the question was settled in respect to her rooms, before visiting any others.

Accordingly as they walked along they looked back occasionally, and they soon had the satisfaction of seeing the gentleman and lady coming out of Mrs. Scott's gate. They immediately returned to the house, and were pleased to see that the sign was still in the window. They rang the bell, and the servant girl, who came again to the door, told them the rooms were not engaged.

The gentleman liked the rooms very much, she said, but he wished to see some others before he decided.

"Then he has not decided yet," said Florence.

Here Mrs. Scott herself came out into the entry from the room which they call the parlor in these houses, that is the front room on the

ground floor. She explained to Florence that although the gentleman said it was possible he might return and look at the rooms again, still that he understood very well that if any other person applied in the mean time Mrs. Scott was at liberty to let them, just as he himself was at liberty to take any other rooms, without coming back, if he found any others that suited him.

"That's fair," said John.

"Yes," said Grimkie. "That is fair. So let us look at the rooms, Florence."

Florence assented and so they all went up stairs to look at the rooms. They found them charming. The front room on the second story was pretty large and had two windows, one of which was a bay window looking out toward the beach, with a balcony in front of it. There was a round table in the part of the room nearest the fire place. This was for the meals. back part of the room, and near the bay window, was another table, with a bronze inkstand upon it and some books. There were two or three little sets of bookshelves about the room. with interesting looking books upon them, and several pictures, and a barometer, and a sofa, and several comfortable arm-chairs, and a clock upon the mantle-piece, and many other things.

The back room on the second story was a bed-

room, and there was a very nice and well erranged dressing-room attached to it. The bed was very large, and like all the English beds had high posts and curtains.

There was another chamber in the third story, which would do for Grimkie and John.

The children were much pleased with the rooms, and they sent John off at once to call his mother to see them. Mrs. Morelle came very soon, and at the first glance at the apartments she was satisfied that her party could spend a week in them, at least, very pleasantly. So after asking the price and making some other inquiries she advised Florence to take them, and Florence at once decided to do so.

Mrs. Scott looked quite pleased, and so did the girl, whose name they afterward found was Dorcas. Dorcas, indeed, had taken quite a fancy to Florence when she first saw her, and was in hopes that the party to which she belonged would take the rooms. So she stood all ready to take down the placard as soon as the question was decided, and then looking out the window, she saw the other gentleman coming back just in time to go down and tell him that the rooms had been taken.

Mrs. Scott then asked Mrs. Morelle when she would come.

"The rooms are all ready I suppose," said Mrs. Morelle.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Scott, "quite ready."

"Then," said Mrs. Morelle, "I believe I will stay now. You can go up with Grimkie, can't you, Florence, and settle our affairs at the hotel and bring down the trunks?"

"Yes, Florence," said Grimkie. "We can do that perfectly well."

So the children set off together to go to the hotel, while Mrs. Morelle, taking down some of the books from one of the shelves, proceeded to establish herself as in her own home, in a comfortable arm-chair, near the bay window. Mrs. Scott remained a few minutes longer in the room, making some final arrangements, and then went away, leaving Mrs. Morelle to herself.

In the mean time the children instead of walking back up the range of staircases which ascended to the steep declivity, concluded to go up by the road, with a view of engaging the first carriage they should meet with. It would be necessary, Grimkie said, that they should take a carriage to bring down the trunks, and they might therefore as well have the benefit of it in riding up.

They soon found a carriage which was wait-

ing on the stand, and after Grimkie had told the coachman that he took it by the hour, they all got in.

"The only trouble now is," said Florence, "leaving the hotel so suddenly."

"Why, what is the objection to that?" asked Grimkie.

"I am afraid they will not like it," said Florence.

"I have no doubt they would prefer to have us stay, said Grimkie, "but then we have a perfect right to go. That is one great advantage of being at a hotel, we can go and come when we please. We pay higher than we otherwise should on account of that very privilege."

"Still they must be sorry to have us leave their house," said Florence. "What shall we tell them?"

"Tell them we are going away," said Grimkie. "That is all that is necessary. We can, however, tell them we have taken lodgings if we please. And as to their being sorry to have us leave their house, think how glad Mrs. Scott is to have us come to hers, and you must set off one against the other."

Mrs. Morelle felt no uneasiness in respect to the packing of her things,—for she had accustemed Florence to packing trunks, having taken pains to teach her, in an early part of her travels. She considered a knowledge of this art an essential part of a young lady's education in these days when all the world is in such a constant state of locomotion.

Besides, Mrs. Morelle was accustomed when she stopped at a hotel to take out from her trunk only what she needed, and to keep all that she did take out in good order in her room, so that it could easily be put in again at short notice. This is an excellent habit for all travellers. It not only makes it more easy to get ready to go away at short notice, should occasion occur, but it diminishes very much the care, perplexity, and trouble of making preparations for a move on all occasions.

There was another excellent rule which Mrs Morelle observed herself, and required the children to observe, in order to guard against the danger of leaving any thing behind in the hurry of departure. There are travellers that are always leaving things behind at their lodging-houses or hotels. Some lay down the keys of their trunks upon the floor, when they have locked their trunks, intending to take them up again as soon as they have buckled the straps, and then go away and forget them. Others leave pins or articles of jewelry in the small

bureau-drawers, or even forget their watch which they had placed under the pillow, or in a watch-

pocket hung against the wall.

To guard against these accidents Mrs. Morelle made it a rule to go back into her room, after the trunks and all the baggage had been taken out, and there make a thorough search in all the closets, drawers, cupboards, wardrobes, and in every other possible place of concealment, for things forgotten. She charged Florence and Grimkie not to forget this rule, in leaving the hotel. Florence was to attend to the duty in respect to Mrs. Morelle's bed-room and the parlor, while Grimkie was to attend to it in his and John's room.

Mrs. Morelle accordingly felt no uneasiness, but remained quietly at her bay-window reading the books, and occasionally looking out to watch what was going on upon the beach.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE AQUARIUM.

MRS. MORELLE and the children remained nearly a fortnight at the beach, or cove, as it is sometimes called, at Ventnor, and they amused themselves while there in a great many different ways. Once Mrs. Morelle and Florence engaged one of the bathing machines, and went out to take a bath. The bathing machine, as has already been said, was a small house on wheels. or rather a small room, as the interior was not subdivided. This machine was drawn up so near to the shore that by means of a board, one end of which rested upon the sand, they could both walk into it through a door in one end. The machine was then pushed out into pretty deep water, and there, when Mrs. Morelle and Florence had put on their bathing dresses, they went out by another door in the farther end. which led down by a flight of steps into the sea.

There was a woman with them to take care of them, to hold them up when they were in

danger of falling, and to prevent their being carried away by any wave or current.

Another day they all rambled together among the rocks which extended into the sea at the end of the beach, and which were laid bare at low tide, and spent some time in gathering beautiful specimens of sea-weed, and also pretty shells and pebbles. While they were searching for these things they found a number of curious looking animals swimming about in the pools which were left here and there in the hollows of the rocks, and in depressions in the sand between and among them.

The sight of these animals, and the interest which Florence and John, and also some other children who were near, took in watching them and following them in their various motions and evolutions, put it into Grimkie's head to make an aquarium.

"How can we make it?" asked John, when Grimkie had suggested this idea.

"We can get a box somewhere," said he, "and set it in the sand above high water mark, and fill it full of water, and then carry our animals and put into it."

"Well," exclaimed John, in a tone of great satisfaction, "let's do it."

So the two boys went to a grocer's shop that

was near the beach, and bought an empty raisin box. John was desirous of getting a larger box, so as to have a more spacious aquarium, but Grimkie thought that a raisin box would be as large an one as they could conveniently carry.

Grimkie took the box under his arm, and went with it to the place which they had chosen. While they had been gone Florence had occupied herself in collecting pretty plants and seaweeds, to put into the aquarium. There were some other children there whom they had also interested in the project. One of these had a little spade, which Grimkie said would answer very well for digging the hole in the sand.

After some examination Grimkie decided upon a place among some high rocks, which would in a great measure conceal the aquarium from view, and yet where there was a space of smooth sand in which they thought it would be easy to dig. Here the boys began to make the excavation. They dug at first with the shovel, but John very soon began to put his hands to the work, and he found that the sand was so soft that he could paw it out very easily, much faster, in fact, than he could dig it with the little wooden shovel.

After they had dug down some way they found that the sand became very wet, and soon the water began to flow in. Grimkie said that this was water that oozed in through the lower layer of sand from the sea, and that its coming there would be all the better for the aquarium.

They were obliged to dig the hole much larger than the box was, on account of the caving in of the sand at the sides. They at length made it sufficiently capacious to receive the box, and then setting it down in its place they filled the sand in all around it again, and packed it down hard.

They also put some sand in the bottom of the box, and some stones around the margin, because they thought that a sandy bottom and a margin of rocks would be more appropriate than the wooden boards of which the box was made.

"But then," said John, "I don't see what use it is to have any box at all, if you cover it up all out of sight."

"It will hold the water better," said Grimkie.
"If we had simply made a hole in the sand, there would be a little water in it, it is true, as much as would percolate through the sand, but that would be all, and if we poured in more, it would all soak away, through the sand again."

"Grimkie," said John, "what you say is absurd. First you say the water will soak in through the sand and fill our box,—and then you say it will soak out and empty it."

"It may seem absurd," said Grimkie,—" but the truth is there is a certain level of water in the sand, and that depends upon the level of water in the sea. If you dig down below that level, the water oozes in, till it comes up to it, and if you then pour in more water so as to raise the surface above that level, then it will ooze out till it gets down to it again."

"Is that it?" said John.

"Yes, that is it," replied Grimkie, "exactly. There is often such a level of water as that in the ground, far away from the sea, and when people wish to dig a well they have to dig down far enough to reach it. When they get down to that level, or a little below, then the water oozes into the well, from the sand or ground around it, until it fills the well up to the level of the water in the sand. Then when they draw up some of the water with a bucket, more oozes in, and keeps the water in the well always at nearly the same level."

Talking together in this way on subjects suggested by the work they were engaged in, the children went on industriously until the little tank was finished. They then set in the little plants and tufts of sea-weed which Florence had collected, placing them all around the margin of the water.

The planting of some of these things was very easily effected, for many of them grew attached to small stones, and in several instances, instead of pulling off the plant, Florence took stone and all, and thus to plant them in the aquarium she had only to lay the stones themselves down gently in the water, wherever she wished the plants to grow.

By means of three of these stones Florence formed a very pretty little island in the middle of the pond, which was all covered with barnacles, shells and sea-weed, as if it had been there all the season.

After putting in a sufficient number of plants the children began to bring water in their little pails, from the pools which had been left here and there among the rocks by the tide. When they could they took up small animals at the same time, such as thay saw wiggling about in the pools. After filling the aquarium with water they then went to search expressly for animals, and they succeeded in finding quite a large number of various kinds, and in bringing them in the little pails to the tank. Mesc of these animals were small, but there war one quite big one, a crab. John found the crab but he had to cal! Grimkie to catch him.

The whole party of children—there were wix

or seven in all—amused themselves for nearly two hours in making and stocking their aquarium. At length, when it became time for them to go home, Grimkie proposed that they should keep what they had done a close secret, for fear, f it should be known, that bad boys might come and destroy their work. To this all the children very readily agreed,—not merely from their desire to have the aquarium which they had made preserved safely,—but also from the pleasure of having a secret to keep, which is in such cases always a very important consideration.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE ROMANTIC WALK.

The next day after the aquarium was made, the children were prevented from going to the sea-shore by stormy winds and rain, which kept them in the house nearly all day. They saw immediately after they got up in the morning that dark watery looking clouds were driving rapidly across the sky, and before they had finished breakfast it began to rain.

They looked out at the windows and saw that the beach was quite deserted, except that here and there a sailor-like looking man was walking to and fro, in a tarpaulin hat and water-proof canvass jacket, looking out to see what vessels were passing in the offing, or doing something to secure a boat, or a bathing machine.

There were no boats out near the shore, but steamers and vessels under sail appeared in view now and then far out to sea, their forms dimly seen through the mist and driving rain.

"Now," said Grimkie, "the question is

whether we shall spend the day here at the windows, watching the clouds, and fretting because it does not clear up, or whether we shall find something to do in the house, and give up going out altogether."

"I think it is going to clear up by and by," said John. "The clouds look broken."

"Well," said Grimkie. "We can stay here at the windows and watch them if you like."

"No," said Florence, "let us do something else."

Accordingly, after some consultation, the children decided to spend the morning in pressing flowers,—or rather in arranging and preserving those that they had put in press at various times before.

So they took possession of one of the large tables in the drawing-room, and brought out their collections of plants and flowers, and spent a long time in arranging them and gumming them upon little sheets of note paper. John went to the window from time to time, in hopes that the rain would cease, or, at least, that it would abate enough to enable him to go down to see if the aquarium was safe, but it did not. Sometimes it brightened up for a few minutes, and John was sure that it was going to be fair weather. Once he put on his hat and coat and

went out into the street, and so down the steps to the beach; but there soon came on a fresh volume of driving scuds across the sky, and John had just time to get back into the house before the rain began to come down again in a deluge.

Thus the day passed away. At sunset, however, it cleared up, with a fresh breeze from the westward, which soon dried up the roads, and the next morning it was so cool, and the whole country looked so fresh and green from the effects of the rain, that the children thought it would be a fine day for them to make the excursion of the Romantic Path, which it will be recollected they intended to make from Ventnor, according to the plan which they had formed at Shanklin.

The distance from Ventnor back to Shanklin was four or five miles, either by the Romantic Path along the shore, or by the high road farther in the interior. Their plan was to go one way and return the other. This would make a walk of about nine or ten miles.

"Do you think Florence and John are able to take so long a walk as ten miles?" asked Mrs. Morelle.

"If we walk slowly enough, and stop often enough to rest," said Grimkie. "If we attempt

to walk off briskly the whole distance I don't think they would hold out. But we will take the going to Shanklin for this forenoon, and divide the way into three stages of a mile and a half each, and we will stop to rest half an hour at the end of each stage. Then we will remain at Shanklin two hours, and rest, and have a good dinner, and then after dinner we will come home by the road, and divide the return into three stages, too."

"That will be a very good plan," said Mrs. Morelle.

John proposed that they should take something for luncheon. It would amuse them, he said, to have something to eat while they were waiting to rest at the end of the several stages. So he took his knapsack on his back, and when they set out he stopped at some shops in the street and bought a good supply of cakes, and raisins, and oranges.

"I am afraid you will spoil your appetite for

dinner," said Grimkie.

"No," said John. "I always have plenty of appetite whenever there is any thing to eat."

After passing through the town the party of pedestrians descended by a steep and crooked way toward the shore, and soon entered upon the confused mass of fallen rocks, and precipi-

tous cliffs, and deep chasms and ravines, which occupy the region where the landslip occurred. The path went on winding its way through and among these ruins in a very romantic manner.

The place was very solitary, and yet the children met several parties of visitors at different places along the route. The first party that they met consisted of English people. There was a gentleman and a lady, with a young lad about Grimkie's age, though wearing a hat like a man's hat, and two girls a little older than Florence. These all passed by with a very grand and ceremonious air, and without looking at the children at all, or appearing even to know that they were there. They looked straight forward as they walked by, without even turning their eyes.

A little way farther on they met another party. There was a gentleman and a lady and a small boy. The lady looked with a smile upon Florence and the others as they passed, and the gentleman took off his hat and bowed to Florence. The boy also took off his cap.

"Those are French people," said John, in a whisper, as soon as the party had passed.

"How do you know?" asked Florence.

"Because the boy wears a cap," said John "All the English boys wear hats."

After going on for about three-fourths of an hour, Grimkie said they must have completed their first stage, and so he began to look out for some smooth stones to sit upon, for the first halt. He soon found a good place, and sitting down they all made an excellent luncheon of cakes and oranges, talking merrily together all the time. After remaining at this place for about half an hour they went on again.

At the end of the second stage they reached the end of the Romantic Path, and came to a chine called Luccombe Chine. This chine was essentially like all the other chines on the coast -that is, it was a vast chasm or ravine formed by a brook which came down from the interior of the island, and had cut a gap through the cliffs in making its way to the sea. But in this case the ravine was much wider than the one at Shanklin, and not so picturesque. And besides that, the sides of it were in a great measure bare of trees and shrubbery, so that it presented the appearance only of a verdant valley, opening toward the sea, with sheep and cows feeding here and there upon the slopes which bounded it on each side.

The children stopped on the brow of the hill at one side of Luccombe Chine, where they had a wide and beautiful view of the sea for their second halt. After this the path came out into the public road, and they followed the road until they reached Shanklin.

They had intended when they set out from Ventnor to have gone down the chine at Shanklin, so as to have taken one more view of it—the last, as they supposed, that they should ever have the opportunity to enjoy. But they found themselves so tired with their walk that they concluded to go directly to the hotel.

Grimkie went forward as they entered the hotel and engaged a parlor, and soon all three of the party were comfortably established in it—Florence in an arm-chair, and Grimkie and John upon a comfortable sofa. The waiter who conducted them to their room received Grimkie's order for the dinner, and very soon he began to set the table. Grimkie asked John if he was very tired.

"No," said John. "I am just tired enough."

"So am I," said Florence, "but I don't feel much like walking five miles more to get home."

"Ah! but we shall all feel rested after we have had our dinner," said Grimkie.

The dinner consisted of broiled chicken, together with hot muffins and coffee, and also some plum-pudding, and gooseberry-pie fresh from the oven. It was rather a heterogeneous dinner, it is true, but this was not to be avoided on the principle which Grimkie adopted in ordering it, which was to include in his order all that either of the party wished for.

They enjoyed the dinner very much, and Florence said just before she rose from the table that she felt very much refreshed. But when she came to move she found that her limbs were somewhat stiff, and John, in walking from the table to the sofa, made very hobbling work of it. He said he could hardly stand, and he did not think it would be possible for him to walk back five miles to Ventnor.

"Oh, yes you can," said Grimkie. "All that lameness will soon pass off after you have walked a little way."

"I wish myself that there was some other way to get home besides walking," said Florence, "I feel so tired."

"I suppose we might get a carriage," said Grimkie.

"But that would cost too much," replied Florence.

"I am sure that Aunt would prefer that we should take one, if you feel too tired to walk," said Grimkie.

"No," said Florence, after a little hesitation,
"I think we had better walk."

So Grimkie rang for the waiter and paid the bill, and then Florence put on her bonnet, and John began to get ready, hobbling about, however, as he did so, in a very ludicrous manner, in order to make Florence laugh.

But they were not obliged to walk after all, for just as they reached the door, they saw, to their surprise, a stage coach driving up. Upon it were printed the words RYDE, SHANKLIN, VENTNOR.

"Is this coach going to Ventnor?" said Grimkie to the coachman, as the coachman descended from the box.

"Yes, sir," said the coachman.

"Is there any room?" asked Grimkie.

"Yes, sir," said the coachman, "plenty of room inside and out."

"Outside, Grimkie," said John, "let's go outside."

"Clamber up then," said Grimkie.

John's lameness was gone in an instant, and he mounted up to the top of the coach by means of certain iron steps projecting at the side, with all the alertness of a monkey.

Florence thought it better that she should go inside, and so Grimkie helped her in, and then took a seat himself by the side of John, on the top. Thus in five minutes from the time that Grimkie spied the coach, they were all confortably established in or upon it, and the horses were trotting off with them at great speed over the turnpike road, which was as hard and smooth as a floor. In less than an hour they were all safely set down at the door of an inn in the principal street at Ventnor, whence they walked together down the winding road which led to the beach, and thus safely arrived at their lodgings.

After giving Mrs. Morelle an account of their adventures John was very eager to go down to the rocks at the end of the beach and see the aquarium. Mrs. Morelle concluded to go too. So they all proceeded to the place, John giving his mother by the way a very glowing account of the curious and wonderful animals that she would see, provided no bad boys had found the aquarium and torn it up.

Just before they reached the place John ran forward to see, and as soon as he came near enough to look into the little nook where the aquarium had been made he suddenly stopped, and then turned and looked back toward the rest with an expression of astonishment and distress."

"It's gone!" said he. "The boys must have found it after all."

By this time Grimkie and the rest had come to the spot. Grimkie looked down and saw that all traces of the aquarium had disappeared, and that the whole space which it had occupied was covered with a smooth and uniform surface of sand.

"The boys found it after all," said John, mournfully.

"It was not the boys," said Grimkie. "Boys could not have smoothed all the sand over as evenly as that."

"What was it then?" asked John.

"The tide," said Grimkie. "It must have been a high tide."

Grimkie was right. The storm of the day before had raised the water all along the coast, as a storm always does when the wind blows in such a direction as to force the water in toward the land. And thus when the hour of high tide arrived the water rose a foot or two above the usual level, and this carried the waves high enough up the slope of sand, and in among the rocks, to reach the aquarium. The first wave that came in, or rather the first thin sheet of spray that came shooting up over the sand when the wave that brought it broke, swept into the box and filled it brimming full of water. The next one brought in a greater quantity still, and

when it went back it carried off with it a large number of the animals, and also nearly all the sand which the children had banked up around the box to keep it in its place. The third wave lifted the box bodily out of its place and floated it off, carrying with it some of the sand, several stones, a number of plants and the crab, all inside.

The box was carried out from among the rocks by the retreating wave, until it met another wave coming in, by which it was turned over and every thing was spilled out of it. The crab scrambled off, rejoicing to regain his liberty, while the box, now wholly at the mercy of the waves, was dashed about this way and that, and driven along the coast until, at length, it was all broken to pieces.

And this was the end of the aquarium.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE NEEDLES.

Some persons have compared the shape of the Isle of Wight to that of a great bird, with its wings expanded, one toward the east and the the other toward the west—its head being pointed toward the coast of England, and its tail turned toward the sea. This resemblance is very faint, it must be acknowledged, but such as it is it can be seen by the map.

The map, however, gives no idea of what constitutes the real interest of the island in respect to scenery, as this depends upon the ranges of mountains, and of elevated land, and on the broken and precipitous cliffs, passes, and caverns which are formed in many places by the sea breaking in upon, and wearing away, the immense thickness of the chalk beds of which a large part of the island is composed.

The most remarkable of the scenery thus produced is at the west end of the island, which is formed of a vast swelling mass of strata, consisting partly of immense beds of chalk, and

partly of an equally immense number of layers of different colored sands. These sands are. however, so indurated by time as to form a sort of stone, not very hard, it is true, but yet hard enough to resist the action of the waves almost as much as the chalk.

Now the sea, as has been, perhaps, already explained, acting upon a coast like this, can only cut into the substance of the strata below, at the sea level. But by cutting away the formation at this level it undermines the general mass, and then what is above falls down sometimes in immense fragments, and with a sound like thunder. These fragments remain below until they are gradually disintegrated and carried away by the sea, and then when the way is clear the process of undermining is recommenced, and is continued as before, until more masses fall down. The face of the cliffs is thus kept always nearly perpendicular.

In some cases, when the waves encounter masses of rock of different degrees of hardness, the softer portions are worn away more rapidly than the rest, while the hard parts remain and resist the erasive action of the water much longer. In this way vast caverns are sometimes formed, and arches, where great masses of rock are left standing, detached from the line of cliffs, and

connected above by portions of the superincumbent strata which have not yet fallen.

At the extreme western end of the Isle of Wight this phenomenon of the unequal wearing away of the mass of chalk, has resulted in forming four or five enormous pinnacles, that rise perpendicularly out of the water to a vast height, and are stupendous in their dimensions. These rocks are called the Needles. Mrs. Morelle and her party had passed near them some time before, on their voyage from Guernsey to Southampton: and Grimkie and John were very desirous of going to visit them, when they came to the western part of the island. They stopped while they were here at a place called Freshwater Gate, a very wild and romantic spot, where there is a charming hotel, the same that is shown in the engraving in the volume of this series entitled GRIMKIE. This hotel is situated on the top of a cliff, elevated perhaps fifty feet above the water. In front is a zigzag pathway which leads by a series of steps down the shores, where there is a small beach, and a landing-place for sailboats and row-boats. Behind, the land rises in a grand swell to lofty downs, which extend westward to the extremity of the island, and are bordered toward the sea by perpendicular cliffs sev eral hundred feet high.

At the very extremity is a light-house, which is nearly five hundred feet above the level of the sea, and the light of it, in clear weather, can be seen at a distance of thirty miles.

It was found, however, that the great height of this light-house was attended with one disadvantage, and that was the light was often obscured by driving mists and clouds that were sweeping over the land at that elevation, while the air was comparatively clear below, near the surface of the sea. Perhaps these mists and clouds were formed by the condensing influence of such a mass of land rising thus into the higher regions of the atmosphere.

However this may be, it was found that though when it was clear this lofty light could be seen at a very great distance, still it very often could not be seen at all, and so it was determined to build another one, down nearer the level of the water, and in order to carry it out as far as possible toward the channel which the ships must follow in coming in, it was concluded to build it upon one of the Needles.

This was accordingly done, and in coming from Guernsey and Jersey our party were very much interested in observing this light-house, built on a shelving portion of one of the rocks, with a landing-place below, a zigzag stairway leading

up, and a sea-wall along the shore, to prevent the structure from being undermined.

Grimkie and John had both a strong desire to go and visit the Needles, and to land upon the one on which the light-house is built. The only way of doing this was to go in a sail-boat, and they were both afraid that Mrs. Morelle would not be willing to have them do that.

"Would it do for us to ask her?" said John.

"I think it will not do very well," replied Grimkie, "to tell her we wish to go, and ask her if we may; but it will be very right for us to tell her we can go, and ask her if she wishes we should."

"I am sure she will not wish us to go," said John.

"I am not," said Grimkie.

"Why what possible reason could she have for wishing me to go?" said John.

"She might possibly desire it as a part of your education," said Grimkie.

John was silent, not knowing exactly what to say to this, but presently he said he wished that Grimkie would ask his mother, and he accordingly did so.

Grimkie put the case to Mrs. Morelle in the way that he had suggested in his conversation with

John. He said that they could go, if Mrs. Morelle thought it best. It would doubtless be of considerable advantage to John to make such an excursion. He would obtain knowledge and experience by such a trip that he could not acquire by being confined in his travels to railway carriages, steamers, and hotels. He had inquired of the landlord of the hotel, and he said they could have a safe boat, and a trustworthy man to manage it. The weather, too, was settled, and the wind right, and at such a time there was no appreciable danger.

"Still," he said, "he and John both wished to do exactly as Mrs. Morelle desired."

After reflecting upon the subject a few moments Mrs. Morelle said that she thought it would be a very good plan for them to go, and the plan was accordingly carried into effect. The boys enjoyed the sail very much indeed. They passed at one time close under some of the most stupendous cliffs-so lofty and imposing that John was almost afraid to look up to them. When they came to the Needles they were both astonished at the enormous magnitude and height of the several rocks. Each one was an immense mass of chalk, which, where the sun shone upon the surface of it, was of dazzling whiteress

"Whenever after this I hear any body say 'as big as a piece of chalk,'" said John, "I shall think of these Needles."

They landed at the light-house and were very kindly received by the keeper, who took them up into the lantern and showed them the apparatus. The keeper seemed much interested in talking with Grimkie about America.

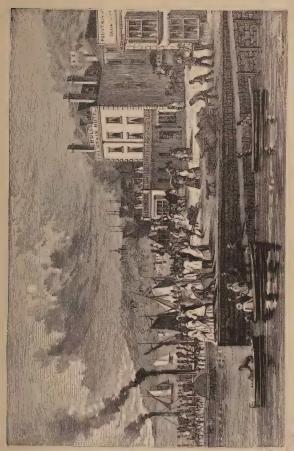
In due time the boys embarked on board their boat again and returned, bringing to Mrs. Morelle and Florence wonderful accounts of what they had seen.

CHAPTER XXVI.

COWES.

By looking at the map you will see laid down, on the northwestern side of the island, the town of Yarmouth. This town is situated at a place where a small bay or harbor is formed by an indentation of the coast. Mrs. Morelle and her party, after making various excursions in the neighborhood of Freshwater Gate,—one of which was to Alum Bay, where the children made quite a collection of different colored sands with a wiew of attempting, on some rainy day when they could not go out, to make some sand pictures—went by a carriage across to Yarmouth, and after remaining there a few days took a steamer and proceeded along the coast by sea to Cowes.

As soon as the party landed at Cowes they proceeded at once to a hotel, called the Fountain Hotel, which was situated directly opposite the pier. They were all greatly interested in the aspect of this hotel as they saw it from the deck of the steamer as they were approaching the



EMBARKING FOR THE MAIN.



shore, and when they arrived at the house and were shown to their rooms, and looked out from the windows to the water they found a most lively and animated scene presented to their view. John exclaimed immediately that it was the prettiest place he had seen in all the Isle of Wight.

There was a flat roof over a back building that extended from the hotel toward the pier, where people could go out and look down upon the landing place, and survey at their leisure all the bustle and commotion attendant upon the arrival and departure of the steamers, and particularly the departure of them—this being a great place for the embarkation of returning travellers for the main land, after completing the tour of the island. The engraving will give the reader a very good idea of this scene. There were stage coaches upon the pier bringing passengers from the interior of the island to embark on board a steamer about to leave. Great piles of trunks and other luggage were seen upon the platform, with passengers around, each selecting his own, and porters or wheelbarrow-men busy in conveying them to and fro.

Grimkie and John soon went down to the pier in order to have the pleasure of mixing a little in the confusion, and seeing better what was going on. They found that besides the great pier, which was appropriated particularly to the steamers, there was a long sloping jetty, formed at the side of it, as a landing place for boats. The surface of this structure was made to slope, so that whatever might be the size of the boat, or the state of the tide, there would be a portion of it to which the boat might be brought up where the coping would be just on a level with the gunwale.

This landing place was used mainly for boats going to and from the yachts lying at anchor in the anchorage ground, near Cowes, which is set apart to their use, or the sailing vessels from foreign parts lying off the town; and also for row boats and small sail boats used for making pleasure excursions on the water.

After Grimkie and John had been rambling about for some time on the pier, observing the various groups, and watching the movements going on, John, happening for a moment to looks up towards the hotel saw Florence there at one of the windows beckening to them.

"Grimkie," said John, "there's Florence beckoning to us."

Grimkie, on looking up and seeing Florence, nodded to her, saying at the same time to John,

"We'll go right up.

"Oh, not yet," said John. "We have not seen half enough yet on the pier. We'll go up presently. She does not want us for any thing particular."

"Is that the way to obey the queen?" asked Grimkie.

So saying he walked off directly toward the hotel. John reluctantly following him.

They found Florence in the room which served the party as sitting-room and parlor. She was alone, Mrs. Morelle being in her bed-room.

"The question is," said Florence, when Grimkie and John came in, "about our plans. We must decide how long we are going to stay here, and whether we shall take lodgings, or remain here at this hotel."

"Let us stay at this hotel," said John, "close to the pier."

"What does aunt say about it?" asked Grimkie.

"She says she has no wish at all about it, only to have smooth water when she crosses over to Southampton," replied Florence.

"Then we will wait here until there is a calm and pleasant day," said Grimkie.

"And what shall we do about lodgings?" asked Florence.

"We can go and see what sort of lodgings

there are, and then you can decide," replied Grimkie.

"Well!" said Florence, "I like that. Will you go now?"

"Yes," said Grimkie.

So they all three set off together to go and look for lodgings.

"I hope you won't find any lodgings," said John, "and I don't believe you will find any. At least you won't find any place so pleasant as the hotel, looking out upon the pier."

"We can tell better after we have seen them," said Grimkie.

The reader will see by the map that there is a river which flows from near the centre of the island and empties into the sea at Cowes. This river divides the town into two parts, which are called respectively East Cowes and West Cowes. West Cowes is much the largest place, and it was at West Cowes that our party had landed.

On emerging from the hotel the children found that the street descended a little toward the left, and seemed to lead toward the centre of the town, and to a region of shops, and of a dense population. In the other direction the street ascended gently, and seemed to run parallel to the shore, and at a little distance from it, leaving room for a row of houses with pretty gardens

and yards in front of them, and at the sides, between the road-way and the water. At several of these houses the children saw placards up in the windows with the inscription upon them:

APARTMENTS
FURNISHED.
SEA VIEW.

They walked along this street or road for some distance, looking at these houses, and trying to choose the prettiest one, in order to go in and look at the rooms.

"I should not be surprised," said Grimkie, "if we should find the royal yacht station out this way somewhere."

"What is the Royal Yacht Station?" asked Florence.

In answer to this question Grimkie explained to Florence that one of the principal amusements of the noblemen and gentlemen of England was yachting, and that the great rendezvous and head-quarters of this amusement was Cowes. Opposite the town was a large anchoring ground, where great numbers of yachts, of all sizes and descriptions were always to be seen riding at their moonings; and on the shore opposite 14

this anchorage was the club-house which belonged to the Royal Yacht Squadron, as the company was called. This club-house, as Grimkie explained, was a sort of private hotel, at which the owners of the yachts and their families, cthe guests they had with them on board their yachts, could have dinners or suppers, or even lodge for the night if they chose to do so, on returning from a cruise.

Grimkie had about reached this point in his explanations, when suddenly the party came to the end of the range of houses and gardens between the street and the sea, and found before them a beach and an open view of the water. There was a sea-wall extending along the shore, and various piers and landings, and off at a little distance quite a large fleet of beautiful little vessels were seen lying at anchor. These were the yachts.

Beyond, at a distance of quarter of a mile or more, in the midst of trees and gardens, a very large and imposing edifice appeared in view. In its general aspect it seemed to be half hotel and half fort, or castle. There was a very tall flagstaff, with a flag flying from it, and a pier reaching out some way into the water. There was also a landing stage by the side of the pier, with a number of small boats secured to it, and

several boatmen, in a very neat sailor's uniform, attending to them.

Florence and the two boys did not go on now to see the club-house, but turned down upon a sort of wharf or pier which extended along the shore behind the houses, where they could have a better view of the yachts, and observe the various movements that were going on among them.

Florence and Grimkie were very much interested and pleased with what they saw, and as for John, he was thrown into a state of great excitement.

"See! see! Florence," said he, "there's a yacht just arriving. See! she's just come up into the wind, and all her sails are shivering. In a minute you'll hear them let go the anchor."

John was right in this prediction, for a moment afterward the plunge of the anchor into the water was heard, followed immediately by a prolonged rattling sound that was produced by the running out of the chain cable.

"And there is another one just beyond," continued John,—"that elegant schooner. She has just come in, too, for the men are doing up the sails. Some of them have got a boat along side, and are waiting"

A moment afterward a party of ladies and gentlemen appeared, coming up from the cabin to the deck of this yacht. They went on board the boat, which, as John said, had been waiting for them. The boat was immediately pushed off and was rowed away over the water in the direction toward the club-house.

"They are going to have a nice dinner there, you may depend," said John.

Just at this moment the attention of all the children was suddenly diverted from the yachts by the appearance of a large open carriage full of people, which came down upon the pier near them. In the carriage was an elderly gentleman, a young lady, a large boy, and some children. There was a footman, too, who rode behind, and who, as soon as the carriage stopped, stepped down and opened the door. Besides the people, there were a great many baskets, and hampers, and boxes, and packages of various kinds. Many of them had the appearance of containing stores and provisions.

There was a boat at a little landing near, which seemed to be waiting for this party. At any rate, as soon as they had descended from the carriage, they all at once proceeded toward this boat, the children running on before, jumping and skipping for joy. The others followed, carrying in

their hands baskets and shawls—people don't use umbrellas at sea—while the footman followed behind, bringing the hampers and larger parcels. There was, however, one hamper so large that one of the sailors had to come up from the boat and help the footman carry it down.

As soon as they were all on board the boat, the sailors pushed it off from the shore, and rowed it out toward one of the yachts, which seemed to be all ready to set sail.

"They are going on a cruise," said Grimkie.

"Whereabouts do the yachts go," asked Florence, "when they make their voyages?"

"All about the coasts of England and Ireland," said Grimkie. "They cruise all over the English Channel and the Irish Channel, and up the mouths of all the rivers, and over the German Ocean to Belgium and Holland. Sometimes they go to the Mediterranean or up the Baltic, and so make quite distant voyages. But it is only the largest and best yachts that can do this,"

"I'll tell you what it is," said John. "It would be a greal deal better after all for us to take lodgings in some of these houses with a sea view. You see all the back windows of these houses look right out upon the water, and the

whole yacht squadron is in full view. I could see every thing that is going on by just looking out at the window. With an opera glass or a spy glass I could see the faces of the people on the decks, children and all. I dare say they have got spy glasses in some of those lodging-houses."

"Do you think it really would be better?" asked Florence.

"Yes," said John, "I am sure it would. There is nothing but the steamers to be seen at the hotel pier, and I care a great deal more about yachts and sailing vessels than I do about steamers."

"And mother?" said Florence inquiringly.

"Oh John does not think any thing about auntie," said Grimkie. "He looks out for himself and not for his mother."

"And that's all right," he added, after a moment's pause.

"Right?" exclaimed John, somewhat sur-

prised.

"Yes," replied Grimkie, "that's right. That's according to nature. Nature does not intend that babies, or little children, or even small boys, should trouble themselves much about their mother's comfort or happiness. It is only when you begin to grow older that you begin to

think of such things as that. A boy must grow up enough to have some manliness about him before we can expect him to think of his mother as well as of himself, in forming his plans."

"But, Grimkie," said John, "I believe mother would like one of these lodgings as well as I should. I am sure she would like to sit at one of those pretty bay-windows, and watch the yachts coming and going, and the parties of ladies and gentleman going out on board, or coming on shore after their voyage was ended. She would like it full as well as seeing the steamers at the pier hotel. I believe she would like it better."

"Very likely," said Grimkie, "I think that it would be a good plan to go and look at some of these lodgings."

"Well," said Florence, "let us go."

The result was that they found a charming apartment, consisting of three rooms, looking out directly upon the water, and very nicely arranged within, with every desirable comfort. Mrs. Morelle was much pleased with the rooms, when she came to see them, and the party at once took possession of them, engaging them, however, only for one week,

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE FERRY-BOAT.

ONE morning while Mrs. Morelle and her party were at their lodgings at Cowes, Grimkie, on coming into the sitting-room at about half-past seven, found the servant girl engaged in setting the breakfast table, and John seated at a table near the window, poring over a map.

"Grimkie," said John, "I have been forming

a plan for an expedition."

"For whom?" asked Grimkie.
"For me and you," said John.

"I am glad you say 'me and you,'" rejoined Grimkie, "for that denotes that you mean to make yourself prominent in the expedition, and take all the charge and responsibility of it."

"Well," said John, speaking in a tone of great satisfaction, "that is just what I should

like."

"I'll go with you upon the expedition," said Grimkie, "upon two conditions."

"What are the conditions?" asked John.

"First," said Grimkie, "that your mother

consents, and secondly, that unless you get me home safely by five o'clock, then all your power is to cease, and I am to be at liberty to get myself home in the best way I can."

"Well," said John, "I agree to the conditions. But don't you want to know first where I am going to take you?"

"No," said Grimkie, "I don't care about knowing that."

"I may get you into some difficulty," said John.

"I don't think you can get me into any difficulty on the Isle of Wight," replied Grimkie, "so great, but that I can get out of it between five o'clock and bed time."

"But I should like to tell you my plan, for my own satisfaction," said John.

"Oh, very well," said Grimkie; "I have no objection at all to hearing about it, if it is for your satisfaction."

If the reader will here once more refer to the map he will see that the town of Newport, which is considered the capital, so to speak, of the Isle of Wight, is situated near the centre of the island, and that a river, called the river Medina, flows past it, coming from the southward, and then proceeding northwardly it reaches the Solent, where by the widening of its mouth

it forms the harbor of Cowes. He will also see that Ryde, the town where our party landed at their first arrival on the island, lies to the northeastward of Newport, and at a distance of six or eight miles from it.

Now John had found out that there was a ferry-boat from Cowes to Newport, and as far as he could calculate from the map the passage by this boat must be about such a trip, as to distance, as that from Peck Slip in New York to Williamsburgh, which requires usually from fifteen to twenty minutes. Now his plan was for him and Grimkie to take this boat and run up to Newport, immediately after breakfast. Then to walk across the country to Ryde, which he calculated would take about three hours. This, he thought, would bring the time to about one o'clock. Then they were to stop at Ryde and rest themselves thoroughly, and have a good dinner, and at four o'clock they could embark on board a steamer at Ryde pier, and come home to Cowes by a voyage along the coast. He had found from his guide-book that there was a steamer to leave Ryde for Cowes every day at four, and that it arrived at Cowes between halfpast four and five.

"So you see, uncle George," said John, "that

you will be safe home here before my time expires."

"Yes," said Mr. George, "if all your plans come out according to your calculations."

"And con't you think they will?" asked John.

"I think it very likely," said Mr. George.
"How often do the ferry-boats run between here
and Newport?"

"I don't know," said John. "The Peck Slip ferry-boats run every fifteen minutes, but if these only run half as fast there will be one every half hour, and so we should not have to wait very long. But I think we had better go down immediately after breakfast, so as to be sure to be in season. Besides, I want to be in time to get a good seat. There may be an upper saloon, as in the Staten Island boats, with seats outside under an awning, and I want to get one of the best places to see."

Mrs. Morelle made no objection to the plan, and so after breakfast the two boys set out, and directed their steps down toward the harbor, for they knew that the ferry landing must be somewhere there.

As the two boys came down toward the river John was quite disappointed at finding how few indications of ships and shipping there were to

be seen. Cowes is a station for the arrival and departure of ships that is famous all over the maritime world. Inward bound ships from China, from the East Indies, from America, and from the Pacific, in passing up the Channel. very often touch at Cowes, which is the first convenient place for them to put themselves in communication with the English world. Here the arrival of the ship is telegraphed to the owners at London, and the news, if there is any, is sent by the reporters to the London papers. Here, too, the captain procures fresh provisions for his crew, and allows them their first run on shore; and he himself often leaves his vessel here and proceeds to London by the railway, to report in person the result of the voyage to the owners, leaving the mate to navigate the vessel up the Channel to the mouth of the Thames, and so up to London.

All this Grimkie and Jeno were well aware of, but they had not sufficiently considered that the movement and bustle occasioned by such a business as this would be confined to the harbor and anchorage ground, and would not come much into the town. The result is that although ships and vessels of all sorts are in this manner continually coming to Cowes, and in consequence of it the harbor and road-stead are kept in a constant

state of bustle and activity, the maritime portion of the town is very quiet. Very few of the vessels have occasion to come to any wharf or pier. There are, accordingly, very few piers, and these are small, the chief thing to be provided for being landing places for the boats which come to bring the sailors on shore, or to carry off supplies of fresh provisions.

The boys were accordingly much surprised that they could not find where the piers and wharves were for the foreign shipping. The ferry slip, as John called it, must be among those piers, if they could only find them. As for Grimkie, he sauntered along by John's side, taking a good deal of interest in the objects and groups which attracted his and John's attention by the way, but not appearing to feel at all concerned about finding the ferry-boat. Indeed, he considered himself entirely free from all responsibility, being wholly under John's charge until five o'clock.

[&]quot;Grimkie," said John at length, "I don't set any signs of a ferry-boat."

[&]quot;Neither do I," said Grimkie.

[&]quot;I don't see how we are going to find it,' said John.

[&]quot;How would it do to inquire?" suggested Grimkie.

"That's a good idea," said John, "I'll inquire."

So John went into a shop, and coming out in a moment he said,

"We are all right. We keep on along this street a quarter of a mile further. And there I suppose we shall come to the busy part of the town."

So the boys went on, but instead of coming to a busy region the street seemed to grow more and more solitary as they proceded. They seemed to be following the bank of the river and advancing farther and farther from the mouth of it. Here and there were narrow openings between the shops and houses, with cart-paths leading down to the margin of the water, where there were landings, and sometimes an insignificant pier, with a coal-barge or something of that kind unloading at it.

Presently John began to despair,

"Grimkie," said he, "I verily believe we have lost our way. We have come full a quarter of a mile, and I don't see any signs of a ferry-boat. I mean to inquire again."

"I think that is the very best thing you can do," said Grimkie.

So John stopped a laboring man who was passing, and asked him where the ferry-boat was

"The ferry boat!" repeated the man, stopping and looking up with a stupid stare.

"Yes," said John, "the Newport ferry-boat.

Do you know where it is?"

The man gazed about this way and that with a puzzled and yet vacant look, as if he expected to see the ferry-boat somewhere in the air, and then said,

"No, sir. I don't know—but it must be somewhere about here."

John and Grimkie both tried to keep sober faces until the man had passed by. John then went into a shop to inquire there, and presently came out saying,

"The man says it is down here."

With these words John led the way down a narrow passage which descended toward the water close by the side of the shop.

"He says it is down here," continued John, "but I don't see what sort of a ferry-boat there can be at this little place."

He and Grimkie, however, went down. They found a small landing place built sleping into the water, and one or two small boats fastened to it. A little farther off there was an old sail-boat with one mast, fastened to a desolate looking pier, and lying quite low in the water by the side of the pier.

By this time Grimkie and John both began to be thoroughly bewildered.

"What does it all mean?" asked John.

" I am sure I don't know," said Grimkie.

"Here comes a woman," said John, "let's ask per."

A woman holding a bundle in one hand and leading a child by the other now appeared in view, coming down from the street toward the landing. John went to meet her.

"Can you tell me, ma'am," said John, "any thing about the ferry to Newport?"

"Yes," said the woman, "I'm going in it myself."

"But where's the boat?" asked John, in a tone of astonishment.

"Let's see," said the woman, looking around.
"Isn't that it?" she added, pointing to the old sail-boat. "Yes, that is it."

"That the ferry-boat?" exclaimed John.

"Yes," said the woman, "that's it."

John looked amazed. As for Grimkie, he had taken a seat upon the shank of a great anchor that was lying near, seemingly quite unconcerned. He listened to the woman's answer and looked at the sail-boat, but the expression of calm and philosophical equanimity which usually marked his countenance was not at all disturbed

"We live and learn, John," said he.

"When does the boat go?" said John, turning again to the woman.

"It is time now," said she. "Indeed, it is past the time. I thought I should be too late. He'll be along pretty soon. He'll have to come pretty soon or he'll lose the tide."

John found by farther conversation with the woman that there was not water enough, even for a small sail-boat, to get up to Newport, except at high tide. So the ferry-boat went up every day on the flood, and came down on the ebb, remaining at Newport an hour or so of high water; this made it necessary to change the time of the trip every day, to accommodate it to the time of high water, and thus it was only by a lucky accident that Grimkie and John came to the place in time to secure a passage.

In a few minutes after this a young boatman, with a pair of oars upon his shoulder, and wearing a very frank and good-natured expression of countenance, came hurrying down to the landing. He immediately went out and clambered down on board his sail-boat, and then unfastening it, he brought the bows up to a flight of rude steps in a corner, so that the passengers could get in. When all had embarked he pushed off, and as soon as he got his boat out into the

stream, and fairly clear of the pier and landings, he hoisted his sail, and though the wind was very light the boat began soon to glide along slowly up the river, being borne onward almost as much by the flowing of the tide as by the effect of the gentle breeze upon the sails.

"Grimkie," said John, "I was a little disappointed at first, but I like this now a great deal better than if it was one of our great New York ferry-boats."

"Yes," rejoined Grimkie, "I think we shall have quite a pleasant excursion."

As Grimkie predicted, the boys had, in fact, a very pleasant excursion, though it turned out to be a very different one from that which John had planned. The ferry-boat met with a series of what the boatman considered very unlucky mishaps, though Grimkie and John did not consider them in that light. In the first place. after going on about two miles, it fell calm, and the boat was only carried forward by the tide. As, however, the boatman was nearly half an hour behind his time in setting out, it was so nearly high water when the breeze failed that the tide advanced very little, and pretty soon, unfortunately, notwithstanding all the boatman's efforts to keep his craft in the middle of the channel by means of his oars, the boat ran

aground. If it had been a little earlier in the tide the rise of the water would have soon floated her off, but the water was now up almost at its height, and the boatman, with all the help that Grimkie and John could give him, could not get ter off. Finally the boatman said he must give up the attempt, and must send his passengers on shore by the first small boat which should come along.

So much time had been consumed by all these delays that it was now nearly two o'clock, and it was yet half an hour longer before any small boat came to take them. John did not care for this, since he and Grimkie had the opportunity to fish during the interval—the boatman happening to have some fishing lines on board.

At length a boat came and put the boys and the woman on shore, at a landing near a pretty inn that stood near the margin of the water. The boat would have touched at this place—it being one of her regular landings—if she had not got aground before she reached it. The woman, as it happened, lived near this landing, and as soon as she was put ashore she went home.

The boys now began to be tired and hungry; so they went to the inn and ordered a good din-

ner. They spent nearly two hours at this inn refreshing themselves and eating their dinner.

After dinner they set out to walk home down the river road. The distance was not more than three miles, and they arrived safely at their lodging about ten minutes before five—that is, just before John's time had expired.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

JOHN did not entirely lose his intended visit to Ryde from Cowes, in consequence of the failure of his plan for walking there from Newport, for on the following day his mother engaged a carriage and took the whole party there, for a drive. On their way they passed by the entrance to the queen's villa—Osborne; but as the queen was there at the time they could not go in and walk about the grounds, as they might have done at any other time.

When they reached Ryde they proceeded at once to the hotel where they had stopped on their first arrival upon the island, some weeks before. Here the horses were put up, and the whole party went in and had what they called luncheon, on account of its being not much after noon when they took it. It was, in fact, however, a pretty substantial dinner, consisting of a roasted chicken with suitable accompaniments, and afterward a plum-pudding, a gooseberry-pie, with sugar and cream, and coffee.

When they had finished their luncheon they all went down upon the pier, and after remaining there half an hour the time arrived for the sailing of the steamer for Cowes, and at Mrs. Morelle's suggestion Grimkie and John went on board of it to go back by water, while she and Florence returned to the hotel, and there taking the carriage again, went home by land.

When the week for which they had engaged their lodgings expired, they made an arrangement with the landlady to allow them to remain on the same terms from day to day, until there should be a favorable time for crossing the water to Southampton. The distance is so short, and the water to be crossed is so sheltered, that there is very seldom any considerable swell from the sea there. But as our party were in no haste, and as they were very comfortably established in their lodgings, Mrs. Morelle thought she might as well wait until there should be no swell at all.

This state of things occurred on the second day, after the week expired. On looking out at breakfast time, on that day, the boys found that the water was like glass, and that the sails of such of the yachts as had their sails spread, hung against the masts, without any signs of motion.

So it was determined to cross on that day

The trunks were accordingly packed, the bill paid, and a carriage sent for; and in less than an hour from the time that they rose from the breakfast-table the whole party were upon the pier.

They immediately went on board the steamer and were soon on the way. Mrs. Morelle enjoyed very highly the magnificent spectacle which was presented on every side in crossing the Solent, and along the shores of Southampton Water.

In little more than half an hour after leaving Cowes they landed safely in Southampton, and thus their tour in the Isle of Wight was ended.

A short time after they reached the hotel at Southampton, and while the children and Mrs. Morelle were sitting together at the table, at the close of their dinner, John said to Florence,

"Well, Florence, now that we have left the Isle of Wight, you are no longer queen. You have come to the end of your reign."

"Yes," said Florence, "so I have. Did I manage pretty well, mother?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Morelle. "You managed very well, indeed, and I have enjoyed the whole excursion a great deal better than I should have done if I had had the care of the arrangements myself. I noticed two special excellencies in your management."

"What were they," asked Florence.

"In the first place," replied Mrs. Morelle, "you seemed always to plan for the comfort and pleasure of your party, instead of looking out specially, as persons sometimes do who are in power, for your own comfort and pleasure. And, in the second place, you always acted deliberately, and after due consideration and inquiry. You always found out first all the things you could do, before deciding what you would do, and so always acted under a full understanding of the case. These are excellent things in a commander."

Florence was much gravified to hear this commendation from her mother.

"I should hardly be afraid to trust you with the charge of a party to cross the Atlantic," added Mrs. Morelle, "if there was occasion."

It happened that an occasion occurred for putting a very serious responsibility of this kind upon Florence sooner than Mrs. Morelle had anticipated. This occasion, and the manner in which Florence acquitted herself under it, will form the subject of the next volume of this series.

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